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THE MEDIAEVAL MIMUS

PART II

I certainly did not suspect, when in an earlier part of this essay I promised to examine the literary records of the Dark Ages for traces of the mimi, that anyone would question the reasonableness of my search. But quite recently Edmund Faral has asserted that hunting in these records for Latin mimi is love's labor lost. He says

Périssable comme la joie des banquets et des fêtes qu'ils égayaient, l'œuvre des mimes s'est perdue. Du chant des poètes il n'est rien resté de plus que de l'adresse éphémère des saltimbanques. . . . En fin de compte, il y a deux choses que, dans l'état actuel de nos connaissances, il faut renoncer à savoir: c'est s'il y a une relation entre les poèmes latins que nous avons conservés et les œuvres des mimes; c'est ensuite, si cette relation existe, quelle elle est. On ne peut élever ici que de frêles conjectures. Si les mimes ont chanté, leurs chants ont été enfermés avec eux dans le tombeau, et ce qu'il en est resté dans la mémoire de leurs contemporains s'est éparpillé, déformé et perdu.¹

I admit being frankly bored by *obiter dicta* such as these of Faral's. Neither he nor anyone else knows what a careful search will bring about until the material has been personally examined. I am as impatient as Faral, or any other student, of that unfortunate tendency in modern investigation: viz., to examine with brave display of erudition every stray bit of philological evidence that exists regarding the mimus, and then to jump to any conclusion which suits the irresponsible whim of the historian. For this evident

¹ Cf. *Les jongleurs en France au moyen-âge* (1910), 14, 16.

fault Faral rightly censures Paul von Winterfeld, and I agree with him. But not to examine whatever evidence we possess as to the existence of Latin mimi during the Dark Ages, and then to denominate them straight out the fathers of the mediaeval jongleurs (and Faral does this) is a highhanded proceeding.

How can Faral be so sure that the work of the mimi was as perishable as the gaiety of the banquets which they enlivened, unless he look about him to make sure? There is *a priori* no more reason why an eighth- or ninth-century chronicle should not catalogue the repertory of the mimus, than why a thirteenth-century Provençal novel should tell us so much about the activity of the jongleurs. If, that is, the mimi did sing the popular songs and tell the popular stories of their day, as the later jongleurs did, why then it seems to me almost imperative that we search the literary records of that day, almost sure that we shall come across their traces in these records.

To discover what the jongleur was doing in the Middle Ages, one has but to turn to *Flamenca*¹ and learn how he played on every conceivable musical instrument and had at his tongue's tip every popular song and story in Europe; but we can only theorize about what the mimus was doing in the Dark Ages in the way of song and story. Faral asserts that during the Dark Ages the mimus was doing what the jongleur did later, only that the former's repertoire was much smaller. And I say that Faral has no right to an opinion in the matter, because he confessedly places no reliance upon the literary records in his search for mimus, because he trusts implicitly in the historical records of the Dark Ages.

Now these historical records are unfortunately not only mute as to what songs and stories the Latin mimi brought into Europe, but they are untrustworthy sources as well for any specific knowledge regarding their exact activity. We have seen above and we shall see again below how little value can be accorded the indiscriminate lists of various classes of popular entertainers contained in the historical records Faral prizes so highly. The reasons for this untrustworthiness and the bibliography of the records themselves I have already sufficiently treated.² Let us, however, turn for a moment

¹ Ed. Paul Meyer (1865), *vas.* 584 ff.

² *Modern Philology*, V, 436 ff., VII, 337 ff.; cf. also the excursus at the end of this study.

to the excellent list of old German glosses for "poet, singer, entertainer" made ten years ago by Schönbach,¹ as the most graphic way in which we can here illustrate the confusion which confronts that historian who, like Faral, would determine just what any one word such as scop or mimus meant at the first dawn of the Middle Ages.

We discover that Zimmer was doubtless right in his suggestion that scop meant not alone the dignified epic singer of antiquity but one who entertained his audience with quip and joke,² we find that mimus meant not alone the Roman vaudeville artist but minstrel in the widest sense of the word.³ How, when such is the state of the case, can Faral depose that descendants of the Latin vaudeville-performers were the ancestors of the jongleurs? It is true that we do know more or less about the monkey-tricks of early mimi, as we do about those of the later jongleurs. And in a certain way we can trace the tricks of the one back to those of the other,⁴ for in *Flamenca* we find our old favorite turns of Empire days still in vogue:

603 L'us fai lo juec dels banastelz
L'autre jugava de coutelz;
L'us vai per sol e l'autre tomba,
L'autre balet ab sa retomba;
L'us passet sercle, l'autre sail;
Neguns a son mestier non fail.

But it is not of the circus-performer or of the variety-actor that we are thinking when we speak of jongleur as the child of mimus; it is of the creative artist, the poet, the fashioner and preserver of literary themes and types. Faral seems to forget this salient fact, or he would wilfully blind our eyes to it, for he does nothing toward narrowing and limiting his definition either of mimus or jongleur. On the contrary he deliberately enlarges it.

I object strenuously to this enlargement of the definition of jongleurs to mean "tous ceux qui faisaient profession de divertir les hommes,"⁵

¹ *Wiener Sitzungsberichte*, CXLII, Part VII, 61 ff. I should have forgotten this reference had Mr. G. L. Hamilton not recalled it to me.

² Zimmer, *Quellen und Forschungen*, XIII (1876), 287 f.; Schönbach, *op. cit.*, 64.

³ Schönbach, *op. cit.*, 67.

⁴ Although it is often by no means necessary to do so. In their continual search for concrete sources, students are prone to forget what Crusius calls the homely Aristotelian truth, that the impulse to play and to imitate is among the most elemental stirrings of the human soul, and that this common impulse sometimes quite innocently creates similar types of vaudeville among peoples which have never come into close contact.

⁵ Faral, *op. cit.*, 2.

if it is to be at once used to prove that mediaeval *spielmann* and *jongleur* derive straight from Latin *mimus*. Such enlargement simply clouds the issue. Remember, if you please, that when Faral says "*les jongleurs étaient bel et bien des mimes*" his readers at once and naturally imagine that Faral is claiming for the best of mediaeval art, for music, song, and story, a Latin origin. For these readers are thinking of *jongleurs* as did Diez:¹ "*tous ceux qui faisaient de la poésie ou de la musique un métier.*" They are not thinking, nor do they care to think, of the *jongleurs* as including "*la nombreuse catégorie des saltimbanques, des acrobates et des faiseurs de tours.*"²

I am not seeking the origin of the skill which permitted mediaeval trapeze-performers to swing by their toes or by their teeth, which taught balance on the slack-wire, which sent swords and stones and fire down the living throat, which distorted the human frame into strange shapes, which with a touch of the hand kept a circle of ten gilt balls in the air without one falling to the ground. Neither I, nor any other reader of Faral, cares tuppence at the present juncture whether all the monkey-tricks and the circus-art of the Middle Ages came straight from imperial Rome, or from Sparta, or from Thebes. What we do care for at this moment is to tear the veil from the apparent mystery which enshrouds the birth in early mediaeval Europe of the vernacular and realistic art of that *jongleur* who sang songs and told stories well worth listening to. Now if we confuse *this* sort of artist with every contemporary parasite and clown, or if we believe *this* artist got all his great and living art from earlier generations of professional jesters and fools who "*avaient infiniment élargi le répertoire de leurs exercices primitifs, qu'ils l'avaient varié et compliqué,*"³ then let us say simply that figs grow from thistles and that bricks are made from straw. It is an old artifice of the schools, this one of which we find Faral guilty: he enlarges his definition of *jongleur*, as do Reich and Winterfeld theirs of *mimus*, until it includes everything they wish it to. They then gravely derive from their swollen concepts whatever they wish and with a wave of the hand strut from the stage leaving behind them a puzzled

¹ *Die Poesie der Troubadours*, 31.

² Faral, 2, n. 1; cf. also his recent book *Mimes français du XIII^e siècle* (1910).

³ Faral, 12.

audience. French has a word for such artifice which other languages than English have copied: *legerdemain*.

We have seen that *mimus* is used by critics of the literature of the Dark Ages to mean: (1) Dramatic Performance; (2) Vaudeville; (3) Actor or Entertainer.¹

What then does Reich mean when he says that "everything dramatic in the world's literature that is not classic or imitated from classic models is *mimus*"?² What does Winterfeld mean when he asserts that "only through the continued existence of the *mimus* can we understand the development of the centuries"?³

In such statements they do not restrict the term "*mimus*"—and it is very important to realize this—to any one type of performance (such as drama, recited poem, or song), nor yet to any one type of performer. They make *mimus* betoken a certain literary attitude, they make it synonymous with *realism*. Reich calls almost "everything dramatic" *mimus*; Winterfeld says that the art of profane narration (*weltliche fabulierkunst*) and real life itself (*das lebendige leben*) are *mimus*. The latter would have us call *mimus* every realistic and living portrayal in prose and poetry during the Dark Ages. I protest.

It is not common-sense to make *mimus* in any age connote *biologia*. It is wrong to surrender bodily all the creative realistic literature of the Dark Ages to the commonplace crowd of second-rate vaudeville artists who may have swept northward from Italy during the migration period.⁴ It is absurd to trace the life-giving roots of this creative literature to the purely conventional art of these people.

For vaudeville art is conventional. In the more than two thousand years that we have known of it, the canons of this art have

¹ Cf. *Modern Philology*, VII, 329-32.

² Cf. *Der Mimus*, I (1903).

³ References to Winterfeld in the pages which follow are to his essay "Der Mimus im Mittelalter," *Herrig's Archiv*, CXIV, 48-75, 293-324, unless another title is cited.

⁴ Crusius remarks with much good sense: "I fancy that the authors and reciters of mimes during the empire did not claim to create works of any artistic far less of any literary merit. They furnished, as do our manufacturers of farces, salable stuff for a Roman season." Their audience was "the nobles who shouted themselves hoarse over the bear-mimes and the dog-shows, over the meaningless and sterile clatter of the circus and the vaudeville; the crowd of phillistines, shopkeepers, and barbarians who seized the reins of government." Cf. Crusius, "Ueber das Phantastische im Mimus," *Iberg's Neue Jahrbücher* (1910), 101.

been but seldom violated, few if any great creations have sprung from it. During all the centuries of which we have record, the mimi have been doing much the same thing in the same way. Their jokes bloom perennial, the business of the old mimi may be seen today on the stage of any variety-theater or in the circus-ring. It is nothing short of wonderful, how little their repertory and tricks have changed from the earliest known times when topical song, suggestive dance, portrayal of types of low life, dialect-recital, boasting, repartee, juggling, sleight of hand, buffoonery, and slap-stick were the vogue.

But if it is wrong to surrender creative realistic literature to the mimi, it is no better, I believe, to accord it bag and baggage to the scop. Kögel, for example, says that with the rise of the Frankish empire and the consequent downfall of the smaller courts the honorable state of the ancient poets had come into disrepute. He says that the impoverished descendants of the old *scoffa* now led a vagrant existence in German territory, had to reckon with the tastes of their new audience, the commoner herd, and were thus compelled to include farcical elements in their repertory. Thus, he explains, the poet became often a merry-andrew (*joculator, scurra*); thus it was that more vulgar narrative was fostered, that a great mass of fableaux and short stories suddenly appears in the second half of the ninth century.¹

I am thankful for Kögel's word "suddenly." For, if the creative realistic writing of the late ninth and early tenth centuries had not appeared "suddenly"; if it had come into being fearfully, painfully, step by step—then I should be almost persuaded that it was due to the gradual elevation of the repertory of the mimus, or the gradual degeneration of the scop, or the gradual awakening from a long sleep on the part of the monk. But there is nothing gradual about it—this mediaeval renaissance.² The most superficial examination of earlier records suffices to teach us that in the ninth century

¹ Cf. *Paula Grundriss*², II, 62, 129.

² In this term I do not of course include, as does Scherer, that earlier and abortive "renaissance" which Charles the Great inaugurated, when on his return from the Italian campaigns he tried to gather at his court the best of the Latin culture of the world. For a profane literature divorced from theology did not at that time exist to any degree that made itself a factor in future German writing. Cf. Hauréau, *Charlemagne et sa cour* (1854), Mullinger, *The Schools of Charles the Great* (1877), Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediaeval Thought* (1884), Roger, *L'enseignement des lettres classiques* (1905).

realistic narrative literature came into existence at a single bound, just as at a later period the drama did. For this phenomenon nothing that we know of the opportunity confronting either mimus or scop, nothing we know about their ability to answer to a new opportunity in the ninth century, offers a sufficient explanation. If the impulse to new types of realistic narrative is to come, it presumably must come from without.¹ The mode or manner of this new variation in literature we know; but what is the cause of it?

To photograph life in art requires genius; it requires the immediate personal vision. One more thing is necessary before a realistic scene can take lasting form in a conscious literary product: viz., a diction suited to the purpose of the author. Of these two requisites for a living art, genius is of course the greater and the rarer. Shall we deny this visualizing power in the Dark Ages to the monk and the nun, as critics do, and accord it to the mimus or the scop? Shall we believe the vaudeville-artist could lay aside his slap-stick and write the tales of the monk of St. Gall² or tell Roswitha's legend of the founding of Gandersheim?³ Not I.

¹ It means little to me when Hertz in his *Spielmannsbuch* (2f.) derives the older German minstrels from three groups: scopas, mimi, and vagrant clerks; it means little that Schönbach (*op. cit.*, 62) agrees with him in the main. For neither of these scholars makes clear the time, the reason, or the occasion of such a merging, except to posit it as possible. In other words they dodge, wittingly or not, the main issue. For if three differing art-forms were ever united into a new art-form, then we may be sure some specific impulse was necessary to bring about so desirable a result. To call attention to the opportunity of such a mingling of varied elements, without assigning a definite and valid reason therefor, accomplishes nothing. In every age of which we have record there has been constant opportunity to marry divergent forms of artistic expression and as the legitimate child of such wedlock secure a new literary type. But only rarely, apparently, has this happened, because the proper occasion was lacking.

² Doubtless Notker Balbulus; see Zeumer, *Historische Aufsätze dem Andenken an Georg Waitz gewidmet* (1886), 97 f.; Zeppelin, *Wer ist der monachus sangallensis?* (1890).

³ As the story is known to few if any of my readers, I give it here in a translation which leans heavily upon the German rendition of Winterfeld:

Old people tell the story, they who know the truth,
How once long years ago by the cloister a forest stood
Buried in mountain-shadows just as we are today.
Deep in the midst of the woods there lay a farm
Where Lord Ludolf's herdsmen were wont to search for pasture;
In the hut of the tenant-farmer they found a night of rest
As they stretched the wearied body on a lowly cot,
When the time it was for guarding their master's herds of swine.
Now here it came to pass that on two separate days
Before the Feast of All Saints —the hour of night was late—
The swains saw many a light flash in the forest dark.
And as they looked at the vision at its meaning they marveled long,
For they beheld the luster all of a glory strange

But it should never be forgotten that prior to the tenth century at least cultured German poets felt themselves impelled to express most of their thoughts in a foreign medium, Latin—a medium which no one of them commanded freely, and for two reasons. First, before a wider dissemination of education than then existed there would be none who could attain the stylistic ease which characterized the writings of twelfth-century men of letters; second, in the ninth and tenth centuries simplicity and correctness were rarely striven for, bombast and a rhetoric of word-inflation were the goal.¹

Now, I find no surer indication that it is not *mimus* or *scop* but monk to whom we owe the re-creation of realistic art in the ninth and tenth centuries than that it is just the monks and their

That shone so bright and steady through the grayness of the night.
 Slow and a-tremble they told it to the tenant of the fee,
 Him they pointed the spot which but now the light had illumined;
 And the wish was in his heart to see if the story were true,
 So he joined himself to their group out under the open sky
 And together they set the watch through all the following night.
 No slumber lent its weight to their unwavering eyelids
 Till they had seen again the lights which glistened there
 On the self-same spot, brighter than time before,
 At the very hour which the former night had known.
 In the morning when the sun rose its first beams
 Saw spread abroad the quickening words of rumor,
 Tidings glad of the omen and of its fortunate sign.
 Nor was the matter one to keep from Ludolf the duke,
 Without delay the tale entered his listening ears.
 And he made bold himself to see on the night of the feast
 If to his anxious waiting there might not return again
 The hoped-for symbol shown in the sky above;
 And under the forest-roof with many he stayed and watched.
 But now when night had veiled the lands in her gray mist,
 All round about in a circle there shone in the valley-glen,
 Where one time the cloister should uprear its proud mass,
 Full many a clear light twinkling in every place,
 Which in the radiant glory of its bright beams
 Broke through the shade of the woods, through the gloom of the night.
 At this from a single throat they sang the praise of the Lord,
 Said with one accord here was the sacred place
 To serve and honor Him who had filled it with His glory.
 And thus with grateful heart for all the mercy of God
 At the will of Ode his wife Duke Ludolf halted not
 From that time forth to fell the forest-trees,
 Uproot the thorns, and clear the valley's dells.
 He changed the wilderness where gnome and goblin dwelled
 To be a place of purity where God's praise loudly echoed.
 Whatever things were needful he gathered on the spot
 And laid the broad foundation of the cloister in that place
 Which the sign had shown him with its radiance clear.

¹ Cf. *Modern Philology*, VI, 10 f.

work which furnished all the bases of the mediaeval renaissance. Notker, Froumund, Ekkehard, the author of *Ruodlieb* and of the *Ecbasis*, Roswitha—it is such spirits, struggling with an inept Latin, who gave direction to the glories of a later and vernacular literature; they were the torchbearers. Popular proverbs and tales, the *volkslieder* sung on the streets, the saws of the humblest minstrel, fables learned in distant lands—it was not the patter of Italian vaudeville-artists which brought them into literature and held them there forever; it was the toilsome, if loving, labor of these same monks.¹

It was a great thing that these ecclesiastics did, uniting diverse elements that had hitherto been separate: finding expression for the humbler and more real elements of vernacular tradition in a Latin diction learned from long occupation with biblical-classical models. For this combination made in the monasteries during the ninth and tenth centuries established a new variation in literary forms which gave life and meaning to European literature.

Till that time there were at least three distinct streams of self-conscious and conventional art which ran parallel one to the other but which, so far as we know, never merged their identities:

1. *Alliterative mytho-epic ballads*, changing little through the centuries except as the people's belief in, and remembrance of, the older myths faded, and as new heroes came to replace the older ones. This type of "popular poetry" it is often believed was, if not created by, quite surely carried on and shaped by Germanic *scopas*.

2. *Vaudeville*: the lighter entertainment of every sort from mere juggling to farce which passed from age to age unscotched and it is often believed was brought into Europe by Roman *mimi*, and long continued there.

3. *Monastic copying of biblical and classical tradition*, which leaned entirely on the materials, emotions, and forms of the past and mani-

¹ At this point it may be objected by my reader that I do not take sufficiently into account the poetic coherence and the artistic beauty of the humble models which these monks occasionally incorporated into work of their own. In answer let me say that I believe any effectiveness which popular German art of the Dark Ages had was not due to the spasmodic effort of unlettered, unalert, and unimaginative men dwelling in some isolated community. No, it was in a crowded center of culture, where stirred throngs gathered, that the throes of composition brought forth an enduring and popular art of profane narration. And for the time we are considering, such centers were presumably found only in the monasteries. Cf. *Modern Philology*, VI, 101 f.

fested practically no power of either observation or invention. This was the work of *monks*. It was at heart not Germanic or Roman; it was curiously unracial.

Now from the work of such monks as these no future can reasonably be expected. First as last such work will consist of the dull multiplication of known facts. So the critic has felt himself justified in dismissing all monks from his study of the living sources of mediaeval literature. The critic then turns to the scopas and the mimi: the former, he knows, continued a dignified line of literature marked by lofty epic idealism;¹ the latter, he knows, maintained an undignified line of expression marked by a vulgar but contagious realism. The critic but adds the two together and gains as his total the repertory and art of European mediaeval minstrelsy. Why not? In the left hand I have one apple, in the right hand one apple; I place the apples together; now how many apples have I?

It is as easy as that. That is in a sense just the truth. There were two things separate, the two things united; *but who united them?* Who was it that took the stereotyped facts and figures of Germanic poetry, the stereotyped themes and tricks of lighter entertainment, and for the first known time in European history combined the two in a way that achieved variations of permanent influence? To this question there can be but one answer; the answer is written large and clear in a hundred records. It was the monks.

Variations of permanent influence in literature can be achieved only by writers with exceptional opportunities. Such opportunities in the ninth and tenth centuries lay in monastic culture and environment; they did not lie—in the nature of things they could not lie at that time—outside them. The moment these monks brought their inventive power, their significant ideas to bear upon their writings in such a way as to adjust them to the demands of contemporary thought and feeling, that moment we have no longer *monastic copying of biblical and classical tradition*, we have permanent mutations in literary expression² which yield:

¹ Although we should by no means believe this the only sort of literature cultivated by the scop; cf. *supra* p. 19.

² Cf. Hoskins, "Biological Analogy in Literary Criticism," *Modern Philology*, VI, 420; Manly, "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species," *Modern Philology*, April, 1907. I believe the main results of these two investigations stand firm despite Logeman's irony; cf. his "Biologie en de Studie van Taal en Letteren" (reprint from *Groot-Nederland*, March, 1910), 27 ff.

1. The novel—*Ruodlieb*.
2. The art-epic—*Waltharius*.
3. Legend quick with dialogue—Roswitha.
4. The short story—*Gesta Karoli* of Notker.
5. The beast-epic—*Ecbasis Captivi*.
6. Fableau and lyric—Cambridge MS.
7. Historical poems—*Ludwigslied*,

and a swelling list of satires and parodies, of hymns and sacred ballads even, which have laid aside their traditional adherence to an older art and breathe the life of their day.¹

Let us consider, by way of illustration, what the sequence and the church hymn did for profane poetry:

Occasionally, even in Carolingian poetry, we are surprised by a minstrel's quip (Uodalricus), by a vernacular debate-poem showing through learned Latin guise (the conflictus sometimes ascribed to Alcuin), by cloistral adaptation of jesting tale and fable,² or best of all by some drinking-round like that of the Abbot of Angers. But it is safe enough to say that no matter how witty the treatment of the theme is in such cases, the poems themselves have practically

¹ It is little edifying to note how Kögel unconsciously agrees with Winterfeld in ascribing to the wandering minstrels (*die Fahrenden*) whatever note of simplicity or realism he discovers in tenth-century poetry. The poet of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (Müllenhoff-Scherer, *Denkmäler*, No. x) "knows how to relate his theme simply and graphically . . . and shows contact with the minstrels"; the author of *De Heinrich* (*Denkmäler*, No. xviii) "is a cleric; but he has learned from the art of the minstrels and knows how to express himself concisely"; likewise did the poet of *Kleriker und Nonne*, Kögel thinks, have his theme from a minstrel. This is the old stupid formula: dull, verbose, incoherent—monk; witty, simple, graphic—minstrel. Will someone please tell me why?

This formula has been proven wrong a great many times, never perhaps more strikingly than in the case of *Waltharius*, which I feel has been definitely shown to be, not a Latin rewriting of alliterative heroic songs, but the artistic and largely original work of a monk, Ekkehard I (composed ca. 930), whose source was a mere tale; cf. Wilhelm Meyer, "Der Dichter des *Waltharius*," *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XLIII, 113 ff.; Strecker, "Probleme in der *Waltharius*-Forschung," *Ibergs Neue Jahrbücher* (1899), 573 ff., 629 ff. The most recent attempt to revive Jacob Grimm's "Visigothic epic of Walter of Spain" is ingenious but unconvincing; cf. Menéndez Pidal, *L'épopée castillane* trad. de Mérimée (1910), 18 ff.

² Ker's statement is succinct (*Dark Ages*, 199): "No literary work in the Dark Ages can be compared for the extent and far-reaching results of its influence with the development of popular Latin verse. The hymns went farther and affected a larger number of people's minds than anything else in literature. They gave the impulse to fresh experiment which was so much needed by scholarly persons; provided new rules and a new ideal of expression for the unscholarly. Those who had no mind to sit down and compose an epithalamium in hexameters or a birthday epistle in elegiacs might still write poetry in Latin—unclassical Latin, indeed, but not dull, not ungentele—a language capable of melody in verse and impressiveness in diction."

none of the lightness, grace, skill in versification, and suggestiveness which modern art demands and attains. We are almost sure to find Carolingian poetry far distant from modern ideas, close on the one hand to classical tradition, on the other to the Bible. Theodulf, poet-laureate to the Palace, sums up the matter neatly when he sings

Te modo Virgilium, te modo Naso loquax:
In quorum dictis quanquam sint frivola multa,
Plurima sub falso tegmine vera latent,

except that to Vergil and Ovid other classical models should be added, and the Bible as trusted source of all poetizing needed no comment by Theodulf.

Nor, apparently, was the matter much improved in the poems of tenth-century authors who neglected the opportunity furnished them by the sequence and the hymn. For such songs as the *O admirabile Veneris idolum*, the *Jam dulcis amica venito*, the *alba*, and the *Ode to a Nightingale* lack each one that modern breath which is soon to move in poetry. The first two are lyrical survivals of the past and—effective as they are—no nearer the present manner than the *Vigils of Venus*; the last two are as unbending and stiff as early ecclesiasticism itself. But the Cambridge MS alone is sufficient evidence of the fact that, because of the framework given profane poets by the sequence and the hymn, because of the application of a new Latin to humble vernacular narratives of various kinds, by the end of the tenth century the history of modern poetry is begun. For this MS contains at least one beautiful lyric, the *Levis exsurgit zephyrus*, which is as “unmediaeval” as any modern poem; several extremely clever fableaux, two of them gaining inimitable parody from their employment of the sequence-form,¹ others using the broad effectiveness of a five-syllabled popular line; and one or more songs which are as if made for tavern-entertainment, like the *Johannes abba parvulus*. Other evidences such as the ballad of the wicked dancers of Kölbigk, the love-message in *Ruodlieb*, and songs and hints of songs I have here no space to mention²—these things inform

¹ The leich is a direct descendant of the sequence, dactyls and all, but with rhyme added; cf. Lachmann, *Kleinere Schriften*, I, 334.

² For further study of the material here spoken of, see *Modern Philology*, V, 423 ff.; VI, 3 ff., 137 ff., 340 ff.

us clearly that the monks and the monastic schools had given Europe the four prerequisites for a body of splendid "modern" poetry:

1. The artist with imagination and training.
2. The desire to portray real life in art.
3. Models which the unscholarly could amplify.
4. An audience eager for the author's work.

And yet—and yet Winterfeld contends that only through the continued existence of the mimus may we understand the development of the centuries. Why, where is now his mimus vanished? Surely, if, when the culture of the ninth century cherished in the monastic schools was lighting the way to the modern art of profane narration, there existed a solitary descendant of the old Italian vaudeville-performer in Germany; then just so surely do we know what this mimus was doing. He was mouthing, dancing, squawking, playing on some strange instrument, eating fire, swallowing a sword, engaging in lascivious pantomime with an unclothed mima, juggling with gilt balls, playing the stupid, bragging absurdly, taking off his audience, pounding somebody's head with a make-believe club, balancing a table on his chin, or doing some other thing equally as delightful, some thing for which we moderns seem much in his debt—witness our joy in present-day circuses and "continuous performances." But I feel quite sure this mimus of the Dark Ages was sublimely unconscious he would ever be called upon to father the mediaeval jongleur and spielmann.

Nor can we avoid the issue by believing the minstrel of the ninth century to be not the old Italian vaudeville-performer, but a metamorphosis of him. At times I suspect Wilhelm Scherer. When he says that "*der spielmann ist eine metamorphose des römischen mimus*"¹ I want to know when the change took place, why it took place, who established it, how it happened, what was the result. And of this Scherer says not one word.²

¹ *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung im xi. und xii. Jahrhundert*, 11; *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*¹⁰, 60.

² I am reminded by Scherer's oracular phrase of a classroom dialogue overheard by me some years ago:

Professor: The German empire is a schoolmaster's dream.

Student: But I thought it the creation of Bismarck.

Professor: Bismarck was a schoolmaster.

Now I had thought that Roman mimus was Roman mimus, and am no less surprised to discover him "metamorphosed" by a wave of the hand into German spielmann than was another poor student to discover that his Iron Chancellor had become a pedagogue.

The point is the following: In the ninth and tenth centuries such a modification appears in European literature that we have begun to leave the Dark Ages behind and are coming to the threshold of the modern world. This is indeed a metamorphosis.

We can ascribe the change to causes unknown to us and make up a picture to please our idle whim, or we can seek and find the reason for the change in certain definitely known facts. I prefer the latter course.

"Notker und Hrotsvit verdanken ihr bestes dem mimus," says Winterfeld. I should put it differently and say that when these artists depart from an over-ornamented style and the traditional method which their day used for recording facts and themes, then they owed this "best" neither to a mime nor to any model of their own time, but to themselves. It was possible to be one's self in prose and poetry before the year 1000, though it must be admitted the deed seems to have been hard of accomplishment. The greatest service Ker has done the Latin authors of the Dark Ages is the emphasis of this important fact. Here and there in the hisperic weaving of early Latin literature Ker has found threads of a color so bright, so near to the hues of everyday life, that there seems to be nothing "dark" or "mediaeval" about them. Before Notker ever wrote his *Gesta Karoli*, Gregory of Tours had told of things "that might go straight into a ballad," Gregory the Great had provided great treasure of vivid legend in his *Dialogues*, Ermoldus had so pictured a siege of Barcelona that it was instinct with dramatic truth.

When we read Notker we know what we shall find—a struggling poet, narrow in view, awkward in performance, incoherent in statement. He lacks a hundred things that modern art is heir to. He does not care to, or he cannot, throw off the shackles of his day. But therefore to imagine that in some happy moment of self-forgetfulness he could not depart from his conventional pose and hold us by the simple force of realistic portrayal—unless he purloined his portrayal from a mime—that is to imagine the ninth century as wide and empty as the Hell of Wetton; that is to make of the great monastery of St. Gall a leaden ark.¹

¹ I wonder would Winterfeld have ascribed to a mime the verses of a monk writing in his cell (St. Gall MS, ninth century): "The woodland meadow incloses me, the song of

I. MIMUS AND SHORT NARRATIVE

Fable, fairy-tale, fableau, storielle

From the ninth century on there existed in Germany a great many fables and stories and droll tales which were widely disseminated and very popular. These short narratives are of two sorts: (1) those which are evidently German in origin and workmanship, so far as we may judge by their scenes and motives; (2) those which are perhaps of oriental lineage because they seem to derive from or be kin to themes in the older literature of the South and East.¹

For the first sort no explanation is needed—they are quite simply the work of monks and clerks and minstrels who invented them or who gave them literary form. But for the second sort a problem is felt to exist. Oriental tales in Europe two centuries before the first crusade are felt to be an anachronism. Led astray, therefore, by the romantic suspicion that the ninth century was unlettered, untraveled, and uncreative—tormented by their inability to explain the presence of oriental tales and fables in Germany long before any well-known route of immigration is open—critics have succumbed. They have either assumed a more constant and direct line of transmission between East and West than other evidences seemed to warrant—such as one due to the Byzantine alliances of the Ottos—or they have clutched at the Italian mimus to stop the gap between, say, the Carolingian renaissance and the period of chivalry.

The Italian entertainer may be directly and indirectly responsible for a few of the tales and legends that were current in ninth-century Germany. We know that the great pageants (*circenses*) continued in Italy until late in the migration period at least, and Glock is right in assuming that "the shout which a famished multitude in

the blackbirds echoes in my ears as I sit at my parchment . . . from the tree-summits the cuckoo in his gray cowl calls to me with clear voice. Oh, in truth, 'tis goodly writing here under the forest's roof!" (Kuno Meyer, *Kultur der Gegenwart*, I, xi, 1 [1909] p. 81.)

Here we find a tonsured monk pausing a moment in his appointed task of multiplying sacred texts—dull business!—to speak simply of the world beneath his grated window. Formal diction based upon classical tradition and biblical imagery is left aside, and for a few human breaths a man is writing as he feels. No descendant of an Italian vaudeville-performer is in his mind or by him as he writes—we may be sure of this. And not every ninth-century monk was a Johannes Talpa of Beargarden (for the writings of which worthy cf. MS Bibl. nat., fonds ping. K. L.⁶, 12390 quater—or if this cannot be found, Anatole France, *L'île des pingouins*, Book III, chap. iv).

¹ Cf. Kögel *Gesch. d. deut. Lit.* I, ii, 192 ff. and the quotation there made from Willamowitz' introduction to his *Hippolytos*.

ancient Rome joined to the one for bread then sounded forth not less loud from the lips of immigrant Germans." But the more interested the German in the *mimus*, the sooner would he learn his trick from him. Even if the German had no realistic poetry before he went to Rome, it would not be long before the rote of it was learned and transplanted deep into the heart of Germany. Thus, even if the original impulse in any instance came from without, it would be, I think, as early as the fifth or sixth century¹ that German poets and their audiences had long forgotten how certain very popular themes came from a foreign source. History teaches us constantly how short a span it takes for the naturalization of extraneous material.

There is, however, no positive knowledge in our possession that such oriental cognates as we find in the short narratives in Germany from the ninth century on were ever appropriated by Italian mimes. These narratives—fables, fairy-tales, fableaux, *storiottes*, and legends—are, generally speaking, not the type of thing which the mimes would use to amuse barbarian crowds. It must never be forgotten that the *mimus* is made by Reich, Winterfeld, and Heyne the agent of transmission solely to suit their convenience, and not because of any evidence which they can discover. The *mimus* has been "clutched at" as is a straw by one drowning.

I can explain to my thorough satisfaction the presence of any shorter narrative in ninth-century Germany with never a thought of *minus*. Two great lines of direct connection between East and West at this period are known: books and monasteries.

Anthologies, MSS of excerpts and *exempla*, collections of apologies and *facetiae* and tales, the profaner parts of sacred legends and saints' lives, stirring homilies and dramatic sermons, books like the *Vitae patrum*²—here we have the broad and unfailing river of tradition which flowed from the past into the Dark Ages. The monks knew of these things, but there the matter might have rested, had it not been for the great institutions in which they dwelt.

¹ The story of the withered arm of King Miro's *mimus* may be a case in point. The occurrence (A.D. 889?) is told not by the *minus* but of him and evidently by one who dislikes him, perhaps a Frankish minstrel; cf. *Modern Philology*, VI, 402.

² Many another poem may have found its theme herein as did the satire on Little John the Monk; cf. *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XIV, 469; Winterfeld, *Stilfragen*, 21; Allen, *Modern Philology*, V, 468.

Reichenau, Fulda, Tegernsee, St. Gall, Gandersheim, and Weissenburg—these are but the greatest of the many places in which monk lived with lay-brother, clerk, and student. Now the monastery was not only the house of a religious order, not only a church. It was a school, a university, an inn, a house of refuge, a place of pilgrimage, a hospital, a conservatory of music, a library, a center of culture, and a social focus. So men of every sort came to pass through its walls, to remain a while within them. It housed sovereign and Jew, peddler and soldier, poet and minstrel, artisan and artist, the great man on embassy of state, the humble monk back from a far journey.

In the stir and bustle of this Temple of the Muses, in the sparks which inevitably come from the friction of awakened minds,¹ in imaginations quickened to the facts of life by such companionship with books of the past and men of the present—here should I seek the reason for what would seem to have been a new-fashioned literary realism, and not in the repertory of isolated bands of Italian vaudeville-artists. We need wait for such realism only until the poet comes. And such a one was Notker Balbulus.

Notker was the genius of St. Gall, and he lived in the ninth century. These two facts, it seems to me, explain the whole body of his literary effort. Being the genius of St. Gall, he outstripped all men of his day in writing sequences, he told in a droll way the tales of Eishere, of the Goblin and the Farrier, of the Bishop and the Jew, he wrote fables like the Three Brothers and the Goat, the Flea and the Podagra. All this shows that he saw life at times simply, allowed his Swabian humor to enter an occasional story and gild it, had an eye for the value of terse and dramatic treatment of popular themes, and was possessed of much sense and feeling.

¹ The story of the greatness of St. Gall is told in Ekkehard IV's *Casus S. Galli*; see Schubinger, *Die Sängerschule St. Gallens* (1858); Winterfeld, *Ilbergs Neue Jahrbücher*, V, 350 ff.; and Gautier, *La poésie liturgique*. It goes without saying that the aesthetic culture which characterized some of the courts of the more important episcopal prelates in the tenth century was the direct fruit of monastic culture. For the new expressions in art and literature which an awakened social activity found in the valley of the Loire toward the end of the tenth century, cf. Warren's suggestive sketch of society under Robert the Pious (987-1031) and the many sources of information which he cites (*Publ. Mod. Lang. Assn. of America*, XVII, [1909], "Proceedings," xlviii ff.). It is not without a feeling of amazement that we learn of the existence at this time in French territory of five hundred abbeys and *ecclesiae collegiales*, many of which were centers of the new light; cf. Lot, *Etudes sur le règne de Hugues Capet et la fin du Xe siècle* (1903), 427-42.

But living as he did in the ninth century, Notker was often prone to follow traditional methods in his writing—at such a moment the worst traits of the pedant and the cloister-schoolmaster shone forth from him; he was crude, unbending, artificial. He was unwittingly—poor monk!—paying toll to his age. So did Chaucer in stupid Melibeus.

Notker the ninth-century monk Winterfeld believes requires no explanation. Notker the genius of St. Gall—except for the sequences—Winterfeld calls *mimus*. He says:

The fable has ever been cousin-german to the *mimus*.¹ The main point, however, is that all the preachers and collectors of exempla are pupils of the *mimus*,² for they surely recognized the effective element in the *mimus*³ and because they could not do away with his influence⁴ they at least made use of it. It is a sign of Notker's greatness that he was the first artistic poet of the Middle Ages to weld together with instinctive sureness the *mimus* and artistic poetry.⁵ But while Notker only borrows for his purpose the mimic novelette⁶ Roswitha does the same thing with the drama.⁷ Then came the time when the *mimus*⁸ repaid Notker for making him again a literary possibility. The *mimus*⁹ with his sure feeling for what was enduring in artistic poetry took possession of the sequence-form which artistic poetry had created.

It is possible that in my footnotes to this quotation of Winterfeld's I have not entirely got at his meaning—but I have at least shown how preposterous a list of things he attaches to the one concept *mimus* in a few sentences. I should rewrite his quotation as follows:

The fable has ever been a popular form of expression among illiterate peoples. Early mediaeval preachers found most effective to illustrate their points and hold the attention of their audience these fables and short popular tales, so they made use of them. Notker is the first real

¹ Winterfeld here must mean by *mimus* "realistic poetry," unless he thinks fable and recited *mimus* related.

² *Mimus* here evidently—an Italian teller of stories.

³ *Mimus* here—the Italian's repertory.

⁴ The Italian teller of stories again.

⁵ *Mimus* here—realism, realistic art, real life itself, as an antithesis to artistic writing.

⁶ *Mimische novelle* here—the novelette whose theme Reich derives from mimic drama, like the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius.

⁷ Roswitha does not. In one place she is said to have her theme from a heathen martyr *mimus*, in another place from the *Vitae patrum*.

⁸ This time a minstrel who sang.

⁹ A minstrel.

poet we know of who gave such popular tales artistic form. Roswitha did the same sort of thing in a legend or two, but never in her dramas. Once Notker had shown how the sequence (text and music) added unsuspected richness to the church-service, other poets adopted the same form when writing of profane matters.

In all of Notker as we know him, in anything that has ever been ascribed to him, we find no reference to, no reminiscence of, Italian vaudeville or entertainers. Once in a while—for all too short a moment—Swabian Notker succeeds in being simple, warm, true, or funny. That is all.

II. MIMUS AND LONG NARRATIVE

Ruodlieb

Ruodlieb is often called the first novel in European literature, and novel in a certain sense it is, for it gives us a picture of the social life of its time.¹ But so far as its structure is concerned it is no novel, but a collection of novelistic episodes loosely strung

¹ An ancient creed to which we unthinkingly subscribe is that courtly and artistic expression sprang from the life of a time later than that of this novel, from a new order of things which appeared in twelfth-century Europe. Cf. for instance Langlois, *Origines et source du Roman de la rose*, p. 2: "This courtly literature should be born in the twelfth century. At this epoch woman began to take rank in the society of northern France. She emerges from the isolation to which she has long been abandoned; she finds an environment in which she can exercise the sway of her charm, one which her finer and more delicate spirit inspires with new sentiments. A courtly intercourse is established between persons of the opposite sex."

I have no quarrel with Langlois's words, for it is true that a revolution in European poetry did follow the change in the social life of the people in the twelfth century. And yet what is there in the social life of the eleventh century, as we generally understand it, which would prepare us for the courtly element in *Ruodlieb*? Scherer says truly: "Loud laughter is already proscribed; a moderate merriment and gentle smiles are demanded of women by etiquette. Good breeding is denoted in the very manner of their bearing. The majesty of woman is felt at least aesthetically and expressed in a simile which often recurs in later German poetry: a woman in the flower of her youth is like the moon; a girl approaching is like the rising of the shining moon."

"And humane sentiment, the source of which lies always in a respect for women, makes itself felt repeatedly throughout the poem; the cruelty of the tenth century is gone. The judge shows himself merciful to the fallen but repentant woman. The victor in battle spares the conquered foe. Victory alone is honor enough; be a lion in the fight but a lamb in revenge; small honor attaches to him who avenges a suffered wrong; revenge in its truest sense is to subdue one's wrath. Men begin to grow modest and to use their power scrupulously; the king of Africa accepts but little of the gift which the conquered enemy offers him; our hero wins unwillingly at chess. Hospitality and benevolence are virtues highly to be praised. Widows and orphans receive the fullest tribute of sympathy, and it is a knightly duty to protect them. Tender affection for one's family, an intimate relationship between parents and children, these are the true signs of good people."

What truer testimony do we wish, to know that the conditions of the eleventh century are scarcely as we have dreamed them to be?

together on the name and not the personality of its hero—it is a mediaeval *Wilhelm Meister*.

With the courtly element in *Ruodlieb* I shall not deal. But I desire to emphasize it at the beginning, to show how much of the novel is based upon the real observation of its author, and therefore owes nothing to Winterfeld's omnipresent "mimus."

The problem of the popular element in *Ruodlieb*—of that part of it wherein the most incongruous novelistic materials are gathered but not welded together: fableau, storiette, legend—is no different from the problem involved in the preceding section, I. We find a monk like Notker or Ekkehard I at work incorporating in the best artistic form he could the humbler literature which the books and the oral tradition of his time gave him. The materials of the novel which Winterfeld would have revert to *mimus* are the following:

1. Three merchants murdered in a notorious inn.
2. The dog who unerringly recognizes a thief.
3. The trained bears.
4. The hero's skill with the harp.
5. The exchange of identity between young lovers.
6. The dance of this young couple.
7. The adultery of Red Pate and a young wife.

With 5 and 6 I need not pause, for Winterfeld's contention regarding them is too weak to require refutation.¹ No. 7 he derives straight from an adultery-mimus as played in Rome. The scene in *Ruodlieb* where Red Pate blusters and threatens to break in the door does not come, we are told, from either Plautus or Terence (cf. the scenes of Thraso in the *Eunuch*), "for in these sources, as in the Greek comedies from which they borrowed, the inviolability of the married woman is respected." But in the mimic drama it is just the married woman to whom the spruce seducer (*cultus adulter*) makes his advances. If the wife will but grant Red Pate her favors, he promises

¹ No. 5 Winterfeld derives from *mimus* only because it has a remote analogy with a passage in Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan und Isolde*, whose French sources are somewhat indebted to fableaux and Achilles Tatius, and with an episode in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (which Reich calls "an old *mimus*"). No. 6 (*ille velut falco se gyrat, et haec ut hirundo*) Winterfeld believes to be a "mimic animal-dance" like those cited by Reich, Vol. I, 476 ff. Even if Ferdinand Wolf were right—and he is not—in presuming that in the tenth century beast-fables were given "mimic portrayal" in the cloisters (*Ueber die Lais, Sequenzen und Leiche*, 238 f.), I can see no connection between the dance of our young couple and those of Roman *paegnon*.

her a fine, brisk lover: "I know the young sprig for you—one just tall enough, with yellow locks, slim and graceful, with red cheeks and bright eyes." This, we are told, is the typical walking juvenile of mimic story. The Red Pate, it seems, "is thus playing the added rôle of go-between (*cata carissa*, procuress) so common in dramatic and recited mimus. The shamelessness of the amorous dalliance indulged in also smacks of mimic repertory, so does the knot-hole (in mimic performances a broken wall) through which the old husband spies upon the matter."

I confess that these so-called resemblances between No. 7 and the Roman mimus tend to discourage me with Winterfeld. A knot-hole in *Ruodlieb* is no more a broken wall from Rome than is the crack in the partition through which Roswitha's maidens view Dulcitus. We cannot credit the "mimic drama" with all the eaves-dropping devices of modern drama and story: holes, cracks, hedges, practicable rocks, trees. And as to *cultus adulter*, *cata carissa*, the walking juvenile, and amorous dalliance—there is nothing discoverably "mimic" here. What the author of *Ruodlieb* had before him as source—if any source was there—is nothing more than one of the thousand *dorfgeschichten* of his day:

A dishonest soldier of fortune—the red hair is a symbol to the mediaeval mind—came storming and blustering up to the house where he had heard a young wife dwelt with an old husband. This poor rustic beauty, sullen over her mismated condition, gladly lent herself to the deception that the braggart was near kin to her, and when promised a fine young lover readily granted her person to the intruder. Red Pate carries matters shamelessly and finally murders the protesting husband. He and his paramour are brought to the scaffold, where the broken woman confesses all, is released on the intercession of her stepsons, and goes home to lead a life of expiation for her crime.

Why speak of Thraso and archmimus? The red-pate blusters and pretends to cousinship, that he may put his affair through with a high hand. Why speak of the inviolate marriage-bed of Greek comedy? The wife in *Ruodlieb* is quite in rôle with all the *mal mariées* of popular tradition in mediaeval Europe. Why assign the best portrayal of low life in Germany before Meier Helmbrecht to a "mimic" original? For no honest reason that I can discover.

I regret the length of my occupation with this single theme, but

as it is I have barely escaped the temptation to show how favorite a theme the seduction-remorse story was in mediaeval comedy and fableau which by no manner of reasoning can be derived from Roman *mimus*. As for Winterfeld's contention regarding the four other themes, it does not hold water. The hero who is skilful with the harp is in many a *spielmannsepos*—Rother, for instance. The trained bears and the intelligent dog are commonplaces in the eleventh century, as in every other before or since. They smack of the wandering minstrels, it is true, but there is nothing in their description which suggests that the descendants of Roman *mimi* were abroad in Germany after the first millennium of the Christian era. The three merchants murdered in an inn is a story which appears in many places, as Seiler has industriously shown. Now this is all as we should expect; it accords with what we know from many a source outside of *Ruodlieb*: viz., that humble and popular forms of entertainment and story existed in Europe during the last of the Dark Ages at least, for they were at that time set forth in conscious and artistic poetry and prose. But it does not mean that all the types of Roman *mimus* and performers of *mimus* endured across the migration period and gave the impulse for every sort of modern realism.

I do not know from where the thousand themes came which enriched the literature of the Middle Ages, nor need I know. I readily grant that some of them were ever on the way northward from Rome. The trained bears, I confess, may have had remote ancestors in the *circenses* in Rome, so may their trainer. But this is not the question at issue. The question is, was there a continuous tradition in Germany from fourth century to eleventh¹ of Roman

¹ Winterfeld makes much of the fact that a passage from Sextus Amarcus (chap. i, 403-43) tells how the people from villages in the neighborhood and from the country-roads stream in to hear a *mimus* sing to the accompaniment of a zither several Latin songs, one of which deals with the subtle theory of Pythagoras. He urges that this is sufficient evidence that the whole interest of the villagers lay in the music. True enough—although he might have added that yokels find interest in anything out of the usual run if it costs them nothing—and in this case the fine gentleman dining at the inn paid for the *mimus*. Nothing in Amarcus tells us that the bystanders stayed long to listen. They may have crowded up expectant of magic or an obscene tale in German, and dwindled away before their disappointment.

Winterfeld would account for the propagation of Latin songs in unbroken continuity from early migration times in Europe until the middle of the eleventh century by saying that their musical settings won a constant welcome for them even in ages and at places where people could not understand the texts. This might, I suppose, account

mimic types and artists, but for whom mediaeval living poetry and prose would not have been born. And I say at this point, that so far as we may judge by the records already studied: no.

III. MIMUS AND ROSWITHA

Legend and Drama

As Winterfeld's edition of Roswitha's works¹ is the result of eleven years of labor, and as he allows no possible analogy to the *mimus* to escape him,² I shall content myself with studying the matter of her indebtedness to Italian vaudeville and performer along the lines which he has blazed.

The first legend in which Roswitha shows that she possesses humor, according to Winterfeld, is her *Gongolf*. It contains an episode which pictures a "three-haired" simpleton licking up the sand in his search for the lost spring:

- 185 Cumque lacum peteret fundumque siti reprobare,³
 Qui quondam validis luxuriavit aquis,
 Usque solum stratus, vacua spe non bene lusus,
 Coepit arenosa lingere nempe loca,
 190 Temptans, exiguam posset si lambere guttam;
 Sed nec praesiccam tinxerat hinc ligulam.

Now it is true that in *paegnion* the *mimus* was often bald, and equally true that our simpleton resembles the *mimus* in this one respect almost to a hair, but I should not care to base Roswitha's dependence upon Roman vaudeville on so scant a foundation. Winterfeld says that Roswitha's fool is the real type of mimic *stupidus*, and so he is, but only as a million other fools have been. There is no trait or act of this fellow which would identify him as a for the perpetuation of a very few musical settings—though it is hard to believe even they could be carried across so many centuries of distress and change—but it could not account for such texts as those of the Cambridge MS, for instance, two of which this very minstrel of Amarcus sings.

No, Amarcus' *jocatur* is not the eleventh-century descendant of an Italian *mimus*, unless he is that *rara avis*, a white blackbird. He is a *spielmann* with a varied store of goods, like Der Marner, who had Latin songs of his own to sing for the asking; cf. *Modern Philology*, VI, 400.

¹ *Hrotsvithae opera* (1902).

² "Und froh ist wenn er Regenwürmer findet," like the man of whom Faust speaks. It is such scholastic seriousness which gives much point to Wackernagel's "Die Hündchen von Bretzwil und von Bretten," *Kleinere Schriften*, I (1872), 423 ff. and to a French abbé's derivation of Napoleon from Apollo (Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*).

³ Strecker emends 185 to *sitire* (i.e., *arere*) *probavit*.

particular type of simpleton and make him definite blood-kin of the mimic fool.

Winterfeld goes on to say that this tale of the lost spring lives in Hessian territory today,¹ but "hardly without the co-operation of the mimes." I object to this phrase. It is decorative bye-work and should be expunged from the record. I can make the same statement with equal right of the Grimm legends which rest on an old basis, and my statement would mean as much as Winterfeld's—which is nothing at all. I can thread my leisurely way through Rabelais, say, and wherever I find a fool of the numskull order, one whose typically thick pate the great Frenchman so loved to belabor, I can say: "er ist der echte typus des mimischen stupidus," but that would not be proving any necessary connection between Rabelais's clown and Roman *paenion*.

Roswitha took the theme for her *Basilius*-legend from the *Vitae patrum*, a book which contained a vast deal of narrative material which the Dark ages found entertaining, a book which long furnished, says Winterfeld, "mimes and story-tellers with subjects." A little farther on Winterfeld again uses the word *mimus* to characterize the author of a minstrel-leich (late tenth or early eleventh century) whose theme somewhat resembles that of Roswitha's legend, and which was therefore also presumably borrowed from the *Vitae*.

There is no argument here. The *Vitae patrum* had a great grist of good story-plots in it—minstrels borrowed them, so apparently once did Roswitha. One minstrel-leich is somewhat similar in tone to one of Roswitha's legends. Ergo, Roswitha's source is *mimus*. It does not seem possible that this is all the meat of Winterfeld's argument, but it is. I shall not even ask my reader what he thinks of such work.² So much for her legends in narrative form.

¹ Wolf, *Hessische Sagen*, No. 208; Lyncker, *Deutsche Sagen und Sitten in hessischen Gauen gesammelt*, No. 121.

² At this point Winterfeld inserts a discussion of the similarity between the legend of Venantius Fortunatus dealing with Bishop Germanus (died 576) and a novelette of Apuleius. There is no reason why we should doubt Venantius' obligation in this matter, but why should a sixth-century Italian poet not have known his Apuleius? Surely this does not speak for a Roman *mimus*. "But," says Reich, "Apuleius got much of his material from mimi" (*Der Mimus*, I, 35; Reich's second volume, he announces, will deal with the indebtedness to *mimus* of satire, novel, story, and epistle). Even then, it was still from a literary source that Venantius got his theme and not from direct contact in the Merovingian realm with a *mimus*. But suppose Venantius did

Roswitha's so-called dramas are of course nothing but *legends in crude dialogue-form*. Terence, to whom she refers in a famous passage, meant only one thing to her: dramatic dialogue. To realize how little she understood Roman comedy, how far she missed its meaning and its art, one has but to read Roswitha's legends in dialogue-form. In what follows I shall refer to these productions as "dramas" to prevent misconception of my argument, but dramas they are not, nor dramatic sketches, and it is not the nature of their subjects which prevented their being acted by nuns, or, as one genial critic has suggested, by the mimi—mimi in the Harz Mountains!—but the nature of their substance. If *Sapientia* was ever staged, then were *Rollo and His Uncle* and *Sanford and Merton*. If my reader consider it a quibble to insist Roswitha's dialogues were not dramas, let me inform him that Winterfeld twice speaks of Roswitha and Shakespeare as one speaks of two members of the same family,¹ and once compares her with Goethe.

get the theme in this latter way, I should scarcely argue that what was the case with the last great writer of Silver Latinity in the sixth century was in any sense the case with a Gandersheim nun in the tenth.

¹ Scherer says: "She had the eye for stage-effects, for telling theatrical themes. Many a species of later drama finds in her its prototype. *Gallicanus*, for example, is a historical tragedy, *Dulcitius* verges upon farce, *Abraham* would seem to pave the way for bourgeois drama, *Callimachus* gives us a love-tragedy with the oddest similarity to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*." Such statements are most misleading, as we discover when we find for instance that the final scene in *Callimachus*, where the protagonist is only withheld from an unnatural crime upon the dead body of Drusiana by divine interposition, "reminds one of the grave-scene in Shakespeare's play"; when we discover what is the sequence of events in *Sapientia*, the doublet of *Dulcitius*. I choose this piece, because it illustrates to the best advantage the truth that Roswitha's so-called plays are only legends in dialogue. "Her dialogue is lively," says Scherer, "her speeches are never too long, she often knows how to build her scenes cleverly." When the emperor Hadrian asks the mother how old her children are, she propounds him a riddle in arithmetic which consumes at least ten minutes and is more difficult than its modern derivative: "How old is Ann?" It develops that Fides is 12, Spes 10, and Caritas 8. Then the "action" proceeds. Fides, who will not renounce her faith, is lashed till her flesh hangs in strips, but it doesn't matter; her breasts are cut off, but the blood doesn't flow; she is put into a kettle of flaming pitch, but somehow it doesn't hurt. Then the emperor grows weary and hews off her head. Likewise Spes, who will not renounce her hope. Likewise Caritas, who insists on preserving her charity at all hazards. Is this drama? Even if we relegate to "action off stage" the heating of the kettle which consumes three days and three nights and the overflowing of the kettle which kills five thousand people? No, it is legend such as we find persevering with an obstinacy worthy of a better cause until the fifteenth century at least. An early exemplar is the tale of the martyrdom of St. George (Müllenhoff-Scherer, *Denkmäler*, No. xvii; Zarncke, *Berichte der sächsischen Gesellschaft* [1874], 1 ff.; Scherer, *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XIX, 104 ff.; Seemüller, "Studie zu den Ursprüngen der altdutschen Historiographie," *Festgabe für Heinsel* [1898], 311 ff.) which, in the few fragments preserved to us, puts St. George through the following sample tests: He is bound, broken on the wheel, torn into ten pieces, but he goes

Callimachus Winterfeld dismisses with the phrase: "hier ist für den mimus nichts zu holen," but he dwells the longer with *Dulcitius*. In an earlier essay¹ I suggested that the pots-and-pans scene from this drama reminds the reader of a fableau (*schwank*), ignorant at the moment that Winterfeld discovered in it a remarkable analogy to the episode in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* where the queen of the elves, struck with blindness, like that of *Dulcitius* when he would visit the captive maidens, caresses the donkey-headed weaver. I still prefer my suggestion of a fableau as presumable source for Roswitha, and do not connect the scene with Titania on the one hand, or on the other with Apuleius' Golden Ass and so with the Roman mimic drama, as does Winterfeld, simply because *Dulcitius* is divinely overcome.

But not alone in this burlesque scene does Winterfeld seek an analogy for *Dulcitius* in the mimus. This and another martyr-legend in dialogue-form Winterfeld believes may revert to pagan martyr-mimes such as those mentioned by Reich² in connection with *Genesius*. I quote Winterfeld's statement:

Such a mimus, I think, Roswitha may well have known. If not this *Genesius*-mimus, then another one. Should she, however, have written her martyr-drama without such a prototype, then her dramatic genius appears only the greater. If no outward, direct connection with the martyr-mimus exists, then Roswitha has of herself created what before her and after her the mimus created. The material is, of course, not so constituted that we can decide from a single instance.

This statement is so disingenuous, so hides the points at issue, that it is difficult to believe an attempt has not been wilfully made to mislead us. There is no similarity whatever in theme, purpose, treatment, or appeal between Roswitha's dialogue-legends and the *Genesius*-mimus, or any other "christologic" mimus which Reich's unfettered imagination can shape from nebulae.

Roswitha was no "dramatic genius." If she had had even the on preaching. He is pulverized, cremated, his ashes are thrown into a well, great boulders heaped upon it, but he goes on preaching. This legend of St. George, although it does remind us of the poem "And the barber went on shaving," I do not regard as a parody by a *spielmann* on a religious theme; I think it is a "dramatic legend"—if its author had read Terence as Roswitha did, he might have "dramatized" it; which, being translated, means only set it to dialogue.

¹ Cf. *Modern Philology*, III, 431.

² *Der Mimus*, I, 871., 566.

glimmerings of that creative ability with which Winterfeld and other critics invest her, she would have understood Terence and given us some sort of play. She not only could not write a drama, she did not think of doing so. She wanted to give vivacity and life to the old style of legend, and she succeeded a little. What subject would be nearer her heart than the story of how God in his omnipotence overcame all the wiles of the devil and led trusting and tender maidens straight to him, without spot and without blemish?

The Genesius-mimus is exactly the kind of thing we might expect: ethnologia: character portrayal. An archmimus in the very act of blaspheming against the Christian life and believers is convicted of God and becomes stout in his new faith.

If we could trace the slightest resemblance of theme or diction between Roswitha's work and the Genesius-mimus, as critics think they can between the latter and a fifteenth-century Genesius-mystery play,¹ then the question would assume a different aspect. But we cannot.

The material for her *Abraham* Roswitha derives in part from the *Vitae patrum*. What we have said above regarding such borrowing need not be repeated.² But it seems that in connection with just such an elopement as that of Roswitha's Maria, Jerome cites a living instance in his letters to Eustochius and Sabellianus. He writes: "repertum est facinus, quod nec mimus fingere, nec scurra ludere, nec atellanus possit effari"—such impudence surpasses the fictions of the mimes. Such themes of elopement and remorse were naturally warm favorites with the mimi. It is interesting to note our nun calmly choosing from the whole repertory of legends at her disposal a story of this realistic kind. But these facts bespeak no indebtedness on Roswitha's part to Roman mimus. Nor does her obligation in *Paphnutius*, the other conversion-legend and doublet of *Abraham*, to the *Vitae patrum* establish any connection with mimus.³

¹ Edd. Mostert-Stengel; cf. von der Lage, *Studien zur Genesiuslegende* (1898 f.).

² Cf. *supra*, p. 40.

³ Gottfried Keller uses the same legend in his "Legende von dem schlimmhellen Vitalis," remarking that it seemed as though in this theme "not only the ecclesiastical story-teller's art is manifest, but also traces of an earlier, more profane manner of narration." Winterfeld agrees that there is a good deal of worldly narrative-art in this legend, "or as we should say nowadays, a good bit of mimus, whether we were thinking at the time of dramatic mimus, or recited mimus, the story." For the moment mimus is meaning to Winterfeld *weltliche fabulierungskunst, novelle*.

Winterfeld now pauses to compare Roswitha with Goethe, who in his *Götz von Berlichingen* "instinctively started as she did with *mimus*." The chameleon-word *mimus* we find in this place, however, does not mean a legend from the *Vitae patrum*, nor yet a novelette from Apuleius, but the puppet-theater. Since there is no claim for the marionette-play made by Winterfeld in connection with Roswitha's dramas, we need happily not concern ourselves further with it at this moment.

But Winterfeld has in mind yet another analogy between Roswitha and *mimus*—by whom he means this time the Roman teller of a story. Roswitha prefixes to certain of her works *periochae* (*pronuntiationes fabulae*), i.e., tables of contents of the ensuing drama or legend. Now the Roman *mimus*, like the later minstrels, found it convenient, in a time when there were no printed handbills, to instruct his audience in advance of the nature and theme of his story. It is a thing easily granted, that the producer in advertising his wares would gain effectiveness by sketching them beforehand, but so common a device as this has proved in all ages of simpler and directer art means nothing for Roswitha's knowledge of Roman *mimus*.

It is not far-fetched when from Roswitha's title to *Gallicanus* Winterfeld constructs the presumable way in which a *mimus* might act as "barker" (*marktschreier*) for it: "we are going to portray the marvelous history of Duke Gallicanus; Emperor Constantine promised him his daughter in marriage, etc." So might a minstrel have spoken in the Harz Mountains in the tenth century, true enough; so spoke the secondary *mimus* in Rome, waving his arms wildly to attract the attention of a careless crowd; so in our summer-evening calls through a megaphone the barker or capper for a tawdry show. But is this *mimus* or is it human nature? Both, Winterfeld would answer, for *mimus* means *das lebendige leben*.

His citation in this connection of the opening lines of the rhythm on Antichrist:

Quicumque cupitis audire ex meo ore carmina,
De summo deo nunc audite gloriosa famina
Et de adventu antichristi in extremo tempore

is likewise without point, unless one may include within the pale

of mimus scores of the most incongruous *periochae* from many different centuries and lands. Here is one such:

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

This sort of *pronuntiatio fabulae* could of course be multiplied indefinitely, and yet who would trace its source to mimus? Winterfeld would have done so, I believe, in all seriousness, for it is like the tables of contents in Roman mimic repertory. I should prefer not to, nor would I trace the short pantomime in *Hamlet*, which Ophelia imagines "shows the content of the piece."¹

And finally, in his study of Roswitha, Winterfeld asserts that she had chiefly portrayal in view, and that without much scenic apparatus "like her prototype the mimus." Of course she had, though her character-portrayal is generally weak enough, and her dramas were not acted. Quite as much of course the mimus likewise relied almost wholly upon character-delineation, and his productions were not acted.² But equally in this connection every reading drama—Tennyson, Browning—must be modeled upon the Roman mimus, if the mere absence of much scenic apparatus and action be the deciding hall-mark. Ah me!

IV. MIMUS AND DIALOGUE POEMS

There are eight dialogue-poems which with more or less violence it is customary to group together under the name of eclogues.³ I doubt the wisdom of such a title, for their sources, their subject-matter, and their appeal are so diverse that we cannot honestly feel them to belong to a single literary *genre* affected by learned Carolingian poets, even though they are chiefly written in leonine hexameters,⁴ a meter at this time popular with writers of the diocese of Rheims. These eight poems are:

¹ Winterfeld, *op. cit.*, 319.

² Cf. *Modern Philology*, VII, 330 ff.

³ Cf. Allen, *Modern Philology*, V, 440 ff.

⁴ Cf. Wilhelm Meyer, *Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rhythmik*, I, 193 f.; Traube, *Karolingische Dichtungen*, 39 f.; *Poetae aevi Karolini*, II, 711; Hamilton, *Modern Philology*, VII, 171.

1. Imitations of the manner of Vergil's eclogues: the poem of Naso (Bishop Modoin of Autun, ca. 805)¹ and the *ecloga Theoduli* (Gottschalk of Orbais, ca. 865).² The first of these pictures two shepherds who alternate in singing the praises of Charles the Great in true Vergilian manner and has a reflected, if dimmed, glory in its lines. The second is a most prosy contest between the pagan shepherd Pseustis and the Christian shepherdess Alithia as to the superiority of their separate faiths.

2. Three necrologies eulogizing the virtues of ecclesiastics: the *ecloga duarum sanctimonialium* appended to Radbert Paschasius' Life of Adalhard of Corbie (died 826; the founder of Corvey), in which Philis and Galathea mourn the death of husband and father.³ Burchard of Reichenau's poem in praise of the abbot Witigowo (ca. 997).⁴ The *ecloga* which Agius (Poeta Saxo?) appended to the Life of Hadumod, his sister, who died as abbess of Gandersheim in 874.⁵ Of the three, Agius is the only one who achieves either pathos or poetry, when he subdues his own grief to comfort Hadumod's sorrowing nuns.

3. Two conflictus, one the contest between rose and lily by Sedulius Scottus (ca. 840), the other an anonymous struggle between summer and winter, sometimes attributed to Alcuin but presumably the dull school-task of one of his pupils. Both of these, I imagine, are reglossings of vernacular *streitgedichte*, the former allegorical in its symbolism, the latter pastoral (chorus of shepherds). They vacillate between a more correct diction modeled on learned sources like Vergil, the *disticha Catonis*, etc., and a rougher style which is apparently reminiscent of their popular source.⁶

4. Terence and the *delusor*.

¹ Dümmler, *Poetae aevi Karolini*, I, 384; *Neues Archiv*, XI, 77; Gröber, *Grundriss*, II, 157.

² Osternacher, *Theoduli ecloga* (1902); Vollmer, *Monatsschrift für die kirchliche Praxis* (1904), 321 ff.

³ Traube, *Poetae aevi Karolini*, III, 45; *O Roma nobilis* (1891), 14.

⁴ Gröber, *Grundriss*, II, 167. Because of this "eclogue," as well as because of twelfth- and thirteenth-century conflictus (Gröber, *op. cit.*, 391), I do not understand how Winterfeld can say: "The age of the eclogue is closely limited. It begins with Charles the Great and lasts barely a hundred years."

⁵ Traube, *Poetae aevi Karolini*, III, 369; Hüffer, *Korveier Studien*, I.

⁶ Cf. Traube, "Perrona Scottorum," *Münchener Sitzungsberichte* (1900), 495.

With this material before him Winterfeld asserts that it was in the eclogue-form alone that the artistic poetry of the Carolingian renaissance found its way to the mimus, to real life itself. In all other ways, he contends, the archaizing tendencies of this renaissance with its pretentious copying of ancient literature retarded mimus (*das lebendige leben*) because before Notker no poet, not even Walafrid Strabo, dared be himself. For the moment, then, Winterfeld thinks of mimus as realism.

Immediately, however, he turns to the mimes of Sophron, Theocritus, and Herodas. This sort of eclogue which they wrote, he says, was one of the forms of mimic poetry, accepted and popular for centuries because of its dramatic cast, its dialogue, and the naturalness with which it portrayed life. It was a recited mimus given by one person (often the poet himself¹) and a definite type of mimic literature.

Now this is true. But where in the list of eight eclogues of the Carolingian and later times do we find such mimi as those of Herodas or Theocritus? Modoin's and Gottschalk's poems we can in any sense whatever call mimi only because they were limping imitations of Vergilian eclogues, which in their turn were artificial (if beautiful) imitations of the manner of Theocritus' idylls. Neither Modoin nor Gottschalk ever wrote a real mimus, a recited poem, that is, which although dressed up for a court-audience was yet derived from the real life and characters of their own day. The only mimic thing in the work of either of them is that they used the dead husks of a dialogue-form and of the pastoral convention which had really had life instilled into it a thousand years and more before them.

Now as to Terence and the *delusor*. It looks little like an eclogue, for it is neither a vapid rewarming of the diction of Vergil, a retold vernacular *streitgedicht*, nor yet a cry of praise for a dead ecclesiastic; it is coarse, living, and filled with a note of rough bravado. I do not agree with Winterfeld that this farce was ever acted, for there is no proof on this point, despite what he would cite as stage-directions. And the source of it may be, as Rand thinks, occasioned by Terence's own retorts to Lanuvinus.² But if I did believe with

¹ Cf. Willamowitz, *Hermes*, XXXIV, 207; Weil, *Journal des savants* (1891), 672.

² Cf. *Modern Philology*, VI, 404.

Winterfeld that different types of mimic performances survived in the Dark Ages in Europe, I should claim for this piece continuity with the Roman past and make it a main prop of my contention. For this is the first thing we have so far met in all our travels which would suggest in spirit and form Roman *paegnion*; if anywhere in Christian Europe there is an example of Roman slap-stick mime, here it is. Not in its original form, doubtless, any more than *Oxyrhynchus 413* is an original piece, but at least conceivably the derivative of an Italian original.

V. MIMUS AND HISTORICAL BALLAD

Widukind and Ekkehard tell us of the existence of many historical ballads of the ninth and tenth centuries.¹ In the former's history of the Saxons, for example, we are informed that in the year 915 Duke Henry of Saxony so annihilated the Franks "that the mimi chanted, Where is there a hell wide enough to hold so big a score of dead!"² *Mimus* here, of course, means a professional ballad-singer, and, since Lachmann at least, none has doubted that Widukind was referring to a phrase from a German historical folksong.

Another such *volkslied* from a previous generation is the song of the fight at Fontenoy (843)³ composed by "Angilbert who fought in the front rank and escaped alive alone of all those with him in the van." Now Winterfeld calls this Angilbert *mimus*, and again a *mimus* in the sense of ballad-singer he was, unless he lied, for he wrote a ballad. *Mimus* in any other sense (juggler, entertainer, court-jester, singer fresh from Italy) he was not.

Another historical ballad which Winterfeld assigns to a *mimus* is the one celebrating Pepin's victory over the Avari,⁴ written in the same style and the same meter as the Fontenoy song. This poem Winterfeld connects with a lost Latin ballad on the Iron Charles written by a Frankish minstrel (*mimus*), which is the basis for the story Notker tells us in the *Gesta Karoli*.⁵ In one place at least the

¹ Cf. Kelle, *Gesch. d. deut. Lit.*, I, 378 f.

² Widukindi, *Res gestae Saxonicae* ed. Waitz (1882); finished 968 A.D. with a short continuation a few years later. Ker (*Dark Ages*, 187) says: "Widukind had the national love of ballads. It is not difficult to find in his work traces of popular romance."

³ *Poetae aevi Karolini*, II, 138; Meyer von Knonau, *Ueber Nithards vier Bücher Geschichten*, 138 f.

⁴ *Poetae aevi Karolini*, I, 116.

⁵ Book I, chap. xvii.

monk changes the ballad, and Winterfeld tells us "it is high praise for the mimus that even a genius such as Notker can but spoil where he alters his original." Winterfeld's attempted reconstruction of the ballad is suggestive, but less convincing is his remark that it was always a profession known as *mimi* who composed ballads on the campaigns and fights in which they personally shared. Even the passage from Guy of Amiens (died 1076),¹

Histrio cor audax nimium quem nobilitabat,
Incisor-ferri mimus cognomine dictus,

which relates to the Norman Taillefer, need not find general application for all contingencies and occasions of the three previous centuries.

It would not be important to note this, if it were not that Winterfeld attempts to generalize widely from the poems on Fontenoy and the Avari. Their meter, he says, was the one used for all sorts of themes in sacred and secular balladry from the Merovingian times;² it was at the same time one of the commonest in Roman comedy and beloved by the mass of the people. The *mimi* of the Merovingian epoch, he believes, had greater poetic talent than the whole Round-Table of Charles the Great. He asserts that they handed down their work in the period long before 800 from father to son, from teacher to pupil—presumably an oral tradition, as the character of the transmission shows. The later copies which were written down are not by the *mimi* but by the monks, or copies of such work written down from memory.

Deriving straight then from the *mimi* of Rome, existing as a professional class of minstrels throughout the Merovingian days, fighting and singing for their masters, Winterfeld pictures the authors of our historical ballads and other secular lays. We may believe this or not as we will—the evidence does not prove it.³ All

¹ *Carmen de expeditione Wilhelmi*; Michel, *Chroniques anglo-normandes*, III (1840); *Monumenta historica Britanniae*, I, 856; cf. also Wace, *Roman de Rou*, III, 8035, quoted by Chambers, *Mediaeval Stage*, I, 43.

² Wilhelm Meyer, *Der ludus de Antichristo*, 79.

³ Winterfeld has a way of omitting evidence which does not make for his contention of southern *mimi*: e.g., the story of the Lombard minstrel (*joculator ex Langobardorum gente*) who led Charles the Great over Mount Cenis and as a reward asked all the land to which the sound of his horn could penetrate; cf. *Chronicon Novaliciense* (*Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores*, VII, 73 ff.), written about 1050. Kögel thought to find traces of alliteration in the Latin prose translation of the chronicle; see also Schröder's "retranslation" in *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XXXVII, 127.

we do know is that poets of one sort and another have left us a few ringing songs in the shape of battle-lays and popular songs; and naturally enough the Latin word commonly employed for such poets was *mimi*.

VI. MIMUS AND SATIRICAL SONGS

There is nothing in all the satirical poetry of Europe from the sixth century to the eleventh which hints at the existence of Italian *mimi* in this period. To be sure, Winterfeld cites and translates as the work of such *mimi* two satirical pieces: the tale of the abbot of Angers,¹ a rollicking drinking-song which deserves inclusion in the *kommersbuch*, and the quarrel in execrable rhythmic (rhymed?) prose of two Merovingian bishops, Importunus and Chrodebert.² The former is presumably of Charles the Great's time, the other about the year 665. We have no hint as to the author of either, he may have been a monk, a professional minstrel, or for that matter a man in any other walk of life. In so far, however, as he was known to the people of his time as author of such poetizing, he might be called *mimus*, for *mimus* was the Latin word in certain centuries for that sort of poet. Neither of them has any establishable connection with the Roman *mimus*; in fact, as both pieces seem to spring straight from the observance of contemporary occurrences, and to be the result of some animus on the part of those who wrote them, I should judge both to be the work of native authors who disliked most to see such abbots and bishops—the work of honest churchmen, perhaps.

The poet who lampooned the *mimus*—court-fool—of King Miro of Galicia in the sixth century was a Frankish minstrel, doubtless. He may or may not have had his training from Italy; there is no reason why he should have had or should not.³ The author of the

¹ Dümmler, *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XXIII, 262, 265; Ebert, *ibid.*, XXIV, 147; Zarncke, *ibid.*, XXV, 25.

² Zeumer, *Formulas Merovingici et Karolini aevi* (1886), 220; Paul Meyer, *Recueil des textes bas-latins*, 8. Krusch once called this "das wahrste Denkmal der Merowingerzeit." It was for work like this that Gregory of Tours once reproved King Chilperich as severely as if he had murdered people instead of rhythm. Cf. *Historia Francorum*, Book VI, chap. xlv: "confecitque duos libros quasi Sedulium meditatatus, quorum versiculi debiles nullis pedibus subsistere possunt, in quibus, dum non intellegebat, pro longis sillabas breves posuit et pro breves longas statuebat; et alia opuscula vel ymnos sive missas, quae nulla ratione suscipi possunt"; Winterfeld, *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XLVII, 73.

³ Heyne, *Altdeutsch-lateinische Spielmannsgedichte des 2. Jahrhunderts* (1900), xxiv; *Das altdeutsche Handwerk* (1903), 110; Reich, *Der Mimus*, I, 826; Allen, *Modern Philology*, VI, 402; from *Opera Gregorii Turonensis*, edd. Arndt-Krusch, II, 651.

quip about Uodalrih, the brother-in-law of Charles the Great, was a Frankish minstrel likewise, at least it is from a German song translated into the Latin prose of Notker that we hear of him.¹

There is, further, no possible linking with Roman *mimus* of any of the other satirical quips and songs from early times: the mocking of Liubene's daughter, of the man from Chur, of timid count Hugo, of Little John the monk. Not only can a source in Roman *mimus* not be established for these pieces and for others slightly later in date,² but it would seem more reasonable to believe them the natural outcropping of the mood of the moment, of Swabian humor and sarcasm, or of equally effective French irony, than to refer them by indirection to Rome.

Now it is true, unfortunately true, that in his culture the mediaeval man belonged first of all to the church which was the *ecclesia catholica*,³ after that to his cloister, and that there are in his writings but few traces of his racial character. But when a keen sense discovers lurking beneath the dull exterior of inept mediaeval Latin some trace of native art, of provincial art, why then must we exchange this treasured birthright for the pottage of an Italian *mimus*?

VII. MIMUS AND SACRED BALLADS

One can scarcely forbear smiling at the oracular statement with which Winterfeld begins his argument that Roman *mimi* and their descendants wrote sacred ballads. "The church and its teachers had denounced the *mimus*," he says, "but had failed to suppress him." There can be no doubt of this, for many records tell the story. But Winterfeld continues: "Thereupon the church did not make its peace with the *mimus*, but a part of the *mimi* made theirs with the church. Such a rhythmic poem as Chilperic wrote about St. Medardus would be inconceivable except for the *mimus*, for the *mimus* had begun as early as the Merovingian epoch to clothe biblical and legendary material in this rhythmic form."

As no further explanation is vouchsafed us in the matter, we

¹ Müllenhoff-Scherer, *Denkmäler*³, No. viii.

² For further discussion of all such available early songs and bibliography of them cf. *Modern Philology*, III, 437; V, 44 ff.; VI, 402.

³ Cf. Winterfeld, *Stilfragen aus der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, 12; Allen, *Modern Philology*, VI, 172 ff.

can only conclude that Winterfeld again refers to *mimus* as minstrel; not Roman minstrel, but any realistic poet. What he achieves thereby is problematical, unless he regards it as strange that all biblical legends were not told in metrical form, and by monks. Of the several legendary themes which he mentions, the most popular ones were those dealing with Antichrist and the descent of Christ into hell.¹ An example of the latter sort, an ABC-poem, speaks of the court of a king and tells us of the audience there gathered at Eastertide:

Abbati juncti simul et neophitae.
Hymnorum sonus modulatur clerici
Ad aulam regis et potentes personae;
Procul exclusit saeculares fabulas. . . .

abbots, those newly baptized, churchmen, influential laymen, sing hymns in the court of the king who has forbidden secular stories for the day; and in this aristocratic and pious company Winterfeld believes "the *mimus* too sings of Christ's death, of his descent into hell, and resurrection." But why *mimus*? Simply because the poem has a popular theme such as a minstrel might choose.

Other sacred materials of a popular sort Winterfeld for like reason ascribes to *mimus*: the poem on the destruction of Jerusalem which is worked out realistically after the manner of Josephus, so that not even the stench of the rotting corpses is left to our imagination; the story of St. Placidus which is treated so sympathetically as to be more effective than Herder's handling of the same theme in his *Wiedergefundener Sohn*; the poem on Antichrist over which there broods a mood like unto dark night at noonday, from whose lines a true poet² speaks. Why *mimus*?

Just because here and there in sacred balladry a vivid picture, a real emotion, a direct and unvarnished diction appear; only because no canting monk is speaking, but some earnest poet-preacher who is talking better than his fellows in an early time. We shall never know who such authors were, but they are *mimi* only if that word denotes one of whatever walk of life, amateur or professional, who happens to write an effective rhythm on some religious legend.

¹ Cf. *Zeitschr. f. deut. Alt.*, XLVII (1903), 89; *Neues Archiv*, XXV, 406; Dreyes, *Analecta hymnica*, II (1888), 91.

Surely in no other field of mediaeval writing should we be so surprised to see a song accorded the descendant of a Roman mimus, because of its realistic fervor, as in the field of sacred balladry. From the days of Augustine and Jerome at least to those of Bernard of Morlais the allurements and the rottenness of the world were depicted by poet-monks in a fashion more satirical and naturalistic than modern convention sanctions. There was that in the training and practice of monasticism which wrung the souls of strong men;¹ there was that in life as it was sometimes led in the Dark Ages which impelled clerks to an occasional materialism which sounds odd enough today. But that in all the sombre vision-literature, the dire prophecy, the grim poetry based upon Old Testament story and legend, there is not a ranker growth of materialism than actually exists—this fact may cause us to wonder, not the fact that there is any. It is to my mind no stranger that a Merovingian man of God should be a realist, than that a court-chaplain of the twelfth century should edit a codification of the *Rules of Love*, a book which enjoyed every whit of the authority of Cavendish on *Whist*, or that a Franciscan friar of the Renaissance should swear he had employed eighteen consecutive hours in copying Ovid's *De remedio amoris* and all "for the glorification of the Virgin Mary." We must take what we find without prejudice. The bishops Importunus and Chrodebert are living figures from an early age, even if their lineaments be somewhat distorted by the caricature in which we learn of them.

CONCLUSION

If we use the word *mimus*, as we should not, to mean any realistic and living portrayal in prose or poetry for one thousand years, then I believe that *mimus* is the source of mediaeval jongleur and spielmann, the fountain-head of Romance and Germanic literature.

If we use the word *mimus*, as we should, to mean such dramatic performances and actors, such vaudeville entertainers as existed in fifth-century Rome, then I believe the mediaeval *mimi*—minstrels and poets—had no connection with the southern *mimus*.

¹ Recall as a single example of such travail the poem *De monacho cruciatu* in Hagen, *Carmina mediæ ævi*, 178.

Such connection at least is nowhere visible in the poetry and prose of the European Dark Ages. And in all the chronicles and records from the writings of Jerome, Paulinus of Nola, and Salvianus of Marseilles down to the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury we may nowhere say surely what is meant by the loosely applied word *mimus*, unless the record particularly specify. Even then, as is the case with Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologies*, we are often less wise than when we began.

EXCURSUS

MIMUS AND ITS SYNONYMS IN SAXO GRAMMATICUS

In studying the records from the fifth to the sixteenth century which refer to *mimus*, and its synonyms *scurra*, *histrio*, *scenicus*, *joculator*, we are confronted by a constant difficulty. For we are never sure of what any of these words means, except when it refers in a loose way to a popular but despised race of entertainers "*qui nil sciunt preter insanire*." There are four reasons for this:

1. The church councils which for many centuries published decrees against the *mimi* and their fellows were handed down from one generation to another in transumptis which were often almost identical in their phrasing. Because of this, and because of their failure to gloss the word *mimus* except by accompanying it with a long list of words which referred to all sorts of entertainers and dissolute people, we cannot ever judge from one of these decrees just what the status or occupation of the *mimus* was at any given time.

2. The church penitentials, naturally enough, viewed the activity of *mimi* from an ethical and not from a cultural point of view. We cannot therefore read from such records a sane statement of how any particular age regarded its entertainers; witness the description of Thomas de Cabham, for example.

3. It is frequently not safe to derive conclusions regarding the way in which an age fostered *mimi* from the writings of some historian of that age. Cassiodorus [sixth century], Leidrad of Lyons [eighth], Notker Labeo [tenth], John of Salisbury [twelfth] are good examples of this fact, which can be proved equally well by a score of other writers. For these men in discussing the *mimi* and their activities had in mind what the *mimi* of classical antiquity had

been, and borrowed much of their description of the mimi from classical sources, instead of giving us a picture drawn from the state of affairs in their own day.

4. We are often misled, almost universally misled, if we translate mediaeval mentions of *mimus*, *scurra*, *histrio*, etc., as their etymology would tempt us to. *Mimus*, that is, as it appears in monkish and scholastic Latin during the Middle Ages, does not mean pantomime or mimic portrayer; *scenicus* has nothing to do with stage; *histrio* no longer means actor, etc.

It is, then, labor lost to build up theories regarding the continuance of drama, farce, the art of acting, transmission of various forms of novel, romance, lyric, fable, from any or all of the manifold records regarding mimi, as we yet have them. It is not impossible that new sources of knowledge may be discovered which will tell their tale so clearly that we can use them to construct a more definite picture of the traditions of literary form in the Dark Ages than we now have. But, pending such new discoveries, and for the four reasons above given, we should be exceedingly slow to accept the rather fanciful portrayals of mimi in Europe quoted in the preceding parts of my study.

Now quite a number of the men who wrote about the mimi and their fellows must have known what they were talking about. It would, therefore, seem a foregone conclusion that if there had been at any time previous to the twelfth century, say, well-defined classes of mimi practicing various forms of a settled and traditional art, the historians [or some of them—or one of them] would have gladly given information of these matters. But this point, which apparently requires no proof, is slow to be accepted by many students of the origins of mediaeval literature, chiefly, I think, because they do not believe that men in central and northern Europe during the early Middle Ages could have recreated different literary types, except upon the basis of an inherited transmission of these forms from the south. Many students, thus, like Chambers and Reich, have studied the records not as they are, but as they should be. They have learned not for purpose of wisdom, but for argument and dialectic. And so they have found that for which they were searching, which is, after all, not surprising, for I have never yet

seen a critic approach the monuments of the Dark Ages with a fixed idea in mind without having his pre-conception almost instantly confirmed. "Seek and ye shall find!" is a philological axiom.

I have often wondered why the Danish history of Saxo "the lettered" has not been used to show what *mimus* meant to the Germanic peoples at least¹ during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. For Saxo's references² have more value than any other ones I know, and for two reasons. First, we understand from the *Gesta*, more clearly than we do from any other chronicle I remember, the nature of the person and the circumstance which call forth the appellation *mimus* (*scurra*, *histrio*, *scenicus*, *joculator*); second, Saxo paints the scenes in which these five words are used so graphically that we cannot fail to catch his instant purpose. I append a short synopsis of these passages, because I believe they aid materially in establishing the fact that *mimus* at the beginning of the Middle Ages was a term of such general meaning that students cannot use it or its synonyms to directly further any theory which regards southern entertainers as the source of modern prose and poetry.

I [Holder, 185]. Starkad betakes himself to Hakon, tyrant of Denmark, because he is tired of the public wantonness of the dancers, their idle clatter, their ringing of bells, at the fair in Upsala when the city is crowded with strangers come to observe the season of carnival which accompanies the sacrifices.³ "Ad Haconem Danie tyrannum se contulit quod apud Upsalam sacrificiorum tempore constitutus, effeminatos corporum motus scenicosque mimorum plausus ac mollia nolarum crepitacula fastidiret."

¹ Although this restriction of the meaning of the word is doubtless unnecessary, for Saxo presumably employs the term *mimus* as other historians of his time did. The whole character of his writing shows him to have possessed some of the best of the learning of his day—there is small reason to think he had not acquired his training at a foreign university, Paris perhaps, like his contemporary, Anders Suneson, and many other cultured Danes. Why, then, argue that he spoke of *mimus* and the other words for entertainer except as any historian of his age—the close of the twelfth century—would have done?

² *Saxonis Grammatici Gesta Danorum*, ed. Holder (1886), 81, 133, 185, 186, 195, 203.

³ No account of the temple-feast at Upsala is given, but in Book XIV (Holder, 564 f.) Saxo describes the religious rites at a heathen temple in Rügen. The following lines picture the crowd and the carnival: "Semel quotannis, post lectas fruges, promiscua totius insule [i.e., Rügen] frequentia ante edem simulacre [Squanto-Vitus], litatis pecudum hostilis, solenne epulum, religionis nomine celebrabat. . . . His ita peractis, reliquum diei plenius luxurie epulis exigentes, ipsas sacrificii dapes in usum conuiuii et gule nutrimenta uertere, consecratas numini ultimas intemperantie sue seruire cogentes. In quo epulo sobrietatem uiolare pium estimatum est, seruare nefas habitum."

To translate "scenicos mimorum" with Elton¹ by "of the mimes on the stage" is unwarrantable, unless we dissociate from our idea of stage all thought of actor, play, and playhouse. It is true that in much earlier Latin the noun *scenica* meant "locus publicis addicta, ut sunt circi, theatra, et ejusmodi," but here as in two other passages in Saxo the adjective *scenicus* can mean only "idle, empty, wanton, dissolute." *Mimus* in the passage above quoted denotes a dancer, a noise-maker, and a ringer of bells (or one dressed in clothes hung with bells).

II [Holder, 186]. Starkad went with Hakon and his fleet to Ireland, whose king, Huggleik, was never "generous to any respectable man, but spent all his bounty upon mimes and jugglers (*mimos ac ioculatores*). For so base a fellow was bound to keep friendly company with the base, and such a slough of vices to wheedle his partners in sin with pandering endearments (*blandimentorum lenocinio*). Still he had Geigad and Swipdag, who, by the singular luster of their warlike deeds, shone out among their unmanly companions (*effeminatorum consortia*) like jewels embedded in ordure. When a battle began between Huggleik and Hakon, the hordes of mimes (*mimorum greges*), whose lightmindedness unsteadied their bodies, scurried off in panic. Starkad conquered, killing Huggleik and routing the Irish; and he had any of the actors (*quoscunque ex histrionibus*) beaten whom chance made prisoner; thinking it better to order a pack of buffoons (*scurrarum agmen*) to be ludicrously punished than to take their lives. Thus he visited with a disgraceful chastisement the baseborn throng of jugglers (*iocularis ministerii*)."

I have purposely quoted the translation of Elton, because it employs the technical words indicating different professions: mime, juggler, actor, buffoon. But Elton has translated these terms into the passage, not out of it. Saxo calls the rabble of parasites which composes Huggleik's army *mimi*, *ioculatores*, *histriones*, and *scurrae*, just as he denominates them "partners in sin," "panders," "vicious," "ordure," "lightminded," and "base"—to show what a herd of swine they were. Just as we use the names of certain of the most disgraceful professions today as a term of harsh reproach, with never a thought of the professions themselves, so they did in the twelfth century—so undoubtedly man has always done.

¹ Cf. Elton, *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus* (1894), 228.

III [Holder, 203]. Starkad is sulking at the table of King Ingild, son of Frode IV of Denmark. Ingild's queen, to soothe him, bade a piper (*tibicine de industria*) strike up. But "the crestfallen performer learnt that it is in vain for buffoons to assail with their tricks (*frustra scurrarum lusibus attentari*) a settled sternness. Starkad flung the bone, which he had stripped in eating the meat, in the face of the harlequin (*gesticulantis*) and drove the wind violently out of his puffed cheeks. By this act he showed how his austerity loathed the clatter of the stage (*scenicos plausus*). This reward, befitting an actor (*dignum histrione*), punished an unseemly performance. None could say whether the minstrel (*mimus*) piped or wept the harder. Then, to revile the actor (in *histrionis suggillationem*) more at length, Starkad composed a song." Again, as in the preceding quotation, professional names, *mimus*, *scenicus*, *scurra*, *histrion*, and all to indicate what? A piper. Nowhere better than here can we see how little the heaping-up of lists of class-names so dear to mediaeval chronicles betokens a catalogue of different professions. A second time Elton's translation of "*scenicos*" by "stage" instead of by "idle" or "wanton" is unconvincing. The next paragraph decides the matter.

IV [Holder, 81]. Odin has been told by Rostioph the Finn that a son must be born to him by Rinda, daughter of the king of the Ruthenians. So the god disguises himself as a woman and pretends to be something of a physician. Rinda falls sick, and her father consents to her being bound, as so bitter a drug is prescribed for her by the deceitful Odin that she otherwise could not endure its effects. While she is unconscious Odin accomplishes his dishonest purpose. Because of his assuming the garb of a woman and because of his wanton practices many people adjudged him unworthy to return from his ten years' exile and resume his rank, since he had brought the foulest scandal on the name of the gods. "Extitire tamen, qui ipsum recuperande dignitatis aditu indignum censerent, quod *scenicis artibus* et muliebris officii suscepcione teterrimum diui nominis opprobrium edidisset." Even in this place Elton adheres to his translation of "stage tricks" for "*scenicis artibus*," but we may now disregard him, in so far at least as "stage" means to us "pertaining to the boards of a playhouse." The wan-

dering minstrels had many tricks in their trade—if Saxo's word means aught more than "idle" or "wanton," then it means simply such things as the minstrel did: i.e., dressing up as a woman, playing the quack-physician, perhaps even portraying with his *spilwib* some crude pantomime of lust.

V [Holder, 133]. Eric Mál-spaki (the Shrewd-Spoken), son of Ragnar the champion, by eating the black part of the magic snake-pottage prepared by his stepmother Kraka had become wise to an incredible degree. When he comes to war against the Danes he is approached by the scurrilous Grep, son of Westmar, a guardian of young Frode, and the inevitable flyting ensues. Says Grep to the mighty Eric:

Thou art thought to be as full of quibbling as a cock of dirt;
Thou stinkest heavy with filth, and reekest of nought but sin.
There is no need to lengthen the plea against a buffoon,
Whose strength is in an empty and voluble tongue.¹

The fourth line explains succinctly why Grep calls the Swedish hero a *scurra* (buffoon)—he would make Eric appear an *empty braggart*.

VI [Holder, 195]. Helge the Norwegian, suitor for the hand of Helga the daughter of Frode IV of Denmark, has impetuously agreed to fight singlehanded Anganty of Zealand, a rival suitor, and his eight brothers. Impelled by his dread of the unequal combat Helge sends a messenger to Starkad in Upsala inviting him to the wedding of Frode's daughter, secretly hoping for the great hero's help. But Starkad is pleased to consider the invitation an insult and turning on Helge's messenger tells him "he must think Starkad like some buffoon or trencherman is accustomed to rush off to the reek of a distant kitchen for the sake of a richer diet" (*se scurre uel parasiti more laucioris alimonie gracia ad aliene culine nidorem decurrere solitum existimauerit*). Here *scurra* is used of one whose chief concern is the lining of his paunch—a *glutton*.

From the preceding passages of Saxo's history we see two things: first, *mimus* and its synonyms were used indiscriminately to indicate any sort of vulgar entertainer; second, these words more often

¹ *Vt gallus ceni, sic litis plenus habetis;
Sorde gravis putes, nec nisi crimen oles.
Aduersum scurram causam producere non est,
Qui vacua uocis mobilitate uiget.*

connote simply idleness and baseness. It is important to note that, so far as we may read from the writings of Saxo, there is often little if any difference in content and manner between court-poetry and the sort of poetry which critics have assigned to the *mimi*:

[Holder, 208]: *Pascit, ut porcum, petulans maritum,
Impudens scortum natibusque fidens
Gratis admissum tolerare penem
Crimini stupri.*

[Holder, 140]: *Quando tuam limas admissa cote bipennem,
Nonne terit tremulas mentula quassa nates?—
"Ut cuivis natura pilos in corpore sevit,
Omnis nempe suo barba ferenda loco est.
Re Veneris homines artus agitare necesse est;
Motus quippe suos nam labor omnis habet.
Cum natis excipitur nate, vel cum subdita penem
Vulva capit, quid ad haec addere mas renuit?"*

Such passages as these, which are by no means unique in Saxo, show clearly enough that the gulf between native Germanic singer and foreign *mimus*, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries at least, was one of the former's jealous making, rather than one which existed in fact. The *mimus* was abjured, because he took away the court-poet's audience,¹ and the latter revenged himself by calling him utterly depraved and ever adverting to his foreign origin. Who were these foreigners in the Germanic north? Winterfeld would derive them straight from Rome, if he had remembered his Saxo; but there is no reason to go so far afield. I imagine them simply graceless German *ne'er-do-wells*, *spielmänner* and *spielweiber*, detested by an old house-carle like Starkad, as were the cooking and luxury introduced in the eleventh century from Germany. One of their nobler brothers from Saxony is the *cantor* who tried in vain to warn Kanute of a conspiracy against his life by singing the song of Grimhild's treachery to her brothers [Holder, 427].

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¹ F. York Powell cites in this connection *Corpus poeticum boreale*, I, 255, 530; II, 275 f., 327. The court-poet's pride in his achievements lingers in the legend of how the Danes gave the crown to Hiarn [Hjarrand the harper] because he wrote so beautiful an ode to dead Frode [Holder, 172].

THE SUITORS IN CHAUCER'S *PARLEMENT OF FOULES*

Ever since Professor John Koch of Berlin suggested the relation of Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* to the betrothal and marriage of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, his conclusions have been almost universally accepted.¹ They were felt to give a definite occasion and a fairly definite dating² to one of the most important of the minor poems. So fully have Professor Koch's conclusions been accepted that, in general, they have not been reviewed except in an entirely favorable manner.³ Nor do I now propose to attempt any considerable alteration of such important results in Chaucer study. Yet a recent study of the subject has suggested a further consideration of some points in connection with the wooing of Anne. Especially do I wish to note the discovery of a suitor for her hand, hitherto unmentioned in any discussion of the poem.

¹ "Ein Beitrag zur Kritik Chaucers," *Englische Studien*, I, 288; the same (enlarged) with title, "On an Original Version of the Knight's Tale," *Essays on Chaucer*, Chaucer Soc., p. 408.

² It is true that Professor Koch first suggested, in the essay above noted, St. Valentine's Day, 1381, as the date of writing, after which he assumed 1380, in his translation of the *Minor Poems* (1880), and then 1382, in the *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings* (Chaucer Soc., p. 37). The last dates were on the basis of the allusion to the planet Venus in ll. 117 f.

³ The fullest restatements of the facts have been made by Bilderbeck, in *Selections from Chaucer's Minor Poems* (1897), and Professor J. S. P. Tatlock, in *Development and Chronology of Chaucer's Works* (Chaucer Soc., 1907). The latter has used Theo. Lindner, *Geschichte des deutschen Reiches unter K. Wenzel* (1875), and O. Höfler, "Anna von Luxemburg," in *Denkschriften d. Wiener Akad., Phil.-Hist. Classe*, XX, in addition to Felzel, *Lebensgeschichte des Königs Wenzeslaus* (1788), used by Koch. One or two points in Tatlock's treatment may be mentioned, lest they should seem to oppose my own statements in this article. "In June, 1380, commissioners were appointed to treat of a marriage between Richard and Anne, Wenceslas' sister," should read "between Richard and Katherine, daughter of Ludwig, recently emperor of the Romans" (Rymer's *Fadera*, VII, 257). So also, "and December 20, Richard announced that he had chosen her," based on Höfler's somewhat rhetorical statement (129), should be "December 26," as to date, probably a misprint merely. The last part of the statement, however, seems to me to give a wrong idea of the progress of the negotiations. I have examined the whole series of documents in a paper called "A New Note on the Date of Chaucer's Knight's Tale," in *Studies in Language and Literature*, a volume commemorating Professor J. M. Hart's seventieth birthday. Here may be added only that, in the commission of December 26, Richard merely says, since he had directed the eyes of his consideration (*oculos nostrae considerationis*) toward the Lady Anne, it had pleased him to make beginning of a compact of matrimony (*placuit nobis . . . Fædus inire Conjugii Conjugalis*), and on this account he had appointed certain ambassadors to bring it to conclusion (*pro Negotii hujusmodi Conclusionem*). Anne was to be received, not "on Michaelmas next," but about that time (*circa Festum Sancti Michaelis proximo futurum*) (Rymer, VII, 301).

Regarding the suitors of Anne Professor Koch says:¹

And at p. 110, he [Pelzel, whom he has just quoted in regard to Richard's proposal for her hand] relates that Anne was engaged as early as 1371 to a Prince of Bavaria; and in 1373, when she was seven years of age, to a Margrave of Misnia. . . . In King Richard and the two German princes we may recognize [the] three eagles wooing the formel.

It is true Professor Koch does notice the strangeness of Chaucer's including the Prince of Bavaria, and he explains it by saying:²

People most likely had not a very clear notion as to the state of affairs in Germany. . . . For, in fact, the Prince of Bavaria was no longer a competitor with King Richard, since his match had already been broken off for years.

Yet even this implies that Chaucer knew of the two German suitors and includes them both in his poem, without perhaps knowing that the first was no longer a rival.

Professor A. W. Ward, who accepts Professor Koch's identification of the suitors in his *Chaucer*, says:³

Anne of Bohemia, daughter of the Emperor Charles IV and sister of King Wenceslas, had been successively betrothed to a Bavarian prince and to the Margrave of Meissen, before—after negotiations which, according to Froissart, lasted a year—her hand was given to the young King Richard II of England. This sufficiently explains the general scope of the *Assembly of Fowls*.

Professor Skeat quotes Professor Ward as above and adds a footnote as follows:⁴

The royal tercel is, then, Richard II; the formel eagle is Anne; the other two tercel eagles were her other two suitors.

Taken in connection with what is said in the text, this means the Bavarian prince and the Margrave of Meissen, to whom Anne had been at different times betrothed. In the Globe edition of *Chaucer* Mr. H. F. Heath puts the matter with even greater definiteness:⁵

Anne is represented in the poem by the formel (i.e., female) eagle and Richard by the royal eagle, while the two tercel (i.e., males) "of lower kind," who plead for her love, are the Prince of Bavaria and the Margrave of Misnia, to each of whom Anne had been contracted.

¹ *Essays on Chaucer*, 407-8.

² *Ibid.*, 408.

³ "English Men of Letters" series, chap. II, 57.

⁴ *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, I, 75.

⁵ *Introduction*, xxxix.

It is to this explicit identification of the suitors that I wish to call special attention.

It must have occurred to others than Professor Koch that it was a strange procedure on Chaucer's part to introduce, as a rival suitor of Richard, one whose betrothal had been broken off as early as 1373, at least seven, perhaps nine years, before the time of the poem.¹ Others may have wondered what reason we have to suppose that Chaucer even knew of such an engagement. Such news would surely not have had international circulation, nor would it have been freely communicated to those interested in this new match. At any rate Chaucer would scarcely have been likely to use this long-past betrothal, if there had been a more active suitor in the field. As such a suitor may now be presented with confidence, we may safely dismiss William of Baiern-Holland, who was Anne's betrothed from 1371 to 1373, as not likely to have been in Chaucer's mind. This leaves but one of the two suitors usually mentioned, the son of Friedrich of Thüringen, who himself became Friedrich of Meissen in 1381.

This Friedrich of Meissen is a more important personage. Moreover, some significant details may be added to what has hitherto been connected with his betrothal. That betrothal had been arranged in 1373, as has been noted. That the match was considered a worthy one is clear from the terms Anne's father was willing to make. The sum of "10,000 Schock Groschen Prager Münze" was to be Anne's dower, and for it were pledged the two towns of Brüx and Laun, northwest of Prague.² We shall see that this latter provision

¹ Seven years, that is, if the poem was begun as early as 1380, the earliest possible date to which it could be assigned, either from the reference to Venus (l. 117), or from the beginning of negotiations for a German princess. It is nine years if the poem belongs to the summer of 1382.

² Horn, *Lebens- und Helden-Geschichte Friedrichs des Streitharen*, 80 f.: "Es hieß dieselbe nicht nach etlicher Vorgeben Helena, sondern Anna, . . . und sollte vermöge derselben die leibliche Beylegung über 8 Jahr oder 1381 erfolgen, auch der Keyserl. Tochter 10,000 Schock Groschen Prager Münze zur Heimsteuer mitgegeben, oder aber, wenn die Zahlung binnen einem Jahr nach dem Beylager nicht geschähe, davor Brüx Haus und Stadt nebst Stadt Luna [Laun] pfandweise eingeräumt werden." The reference to "Helena" instead of "Anne" is based on the fact that some of the chroniclers give the former name as that of the daughter married to Richard II of England. One even says that Anne died in 1379, and questions whether another may have replaced her in the marriage. Horn sets the matter at rest by giving the document of betrothal at p. 647.

is of some importance in the sequel. This second betrothal of Anne "had been broken off," says Professor Koch, following Pelzel, "on account of Mayence."¹ The affair "of Mayence" to which Pelzel refers is the rivalry for the archbishopric of Mainz at the death of Archbishop John on April 4, 1373.² The rival claimants for the place were Adolf of Nassau and Bishop Ludwig of Bamberg, the latter uncle of Anne's betrothed and favored by her father, the emperor Charles IV. Adolf of Nassau obtained actual possession, and Ludwig, in spite of recognition by the pope and the emperor, had only pretensions to satisfy him.³ In June, 1377, also, owing to the loss of their chief ally, the Thuringian house came to an agreement with its opponents, and the struggle between Ludwig and Adolf was at an end for the time.⁴

To follow this affair more fully, at the papal schism in 1378 Adolf of Nassau saw his opportunity. When Bishop Ludwig, supported by Wenceslaus, who had now succeeded his father, Charles IV, acted as Archbishop of Mainz in the Diet of 1379, Adolf at once became a Clementist, and received recognition of his claim to the archbishopric from the French pope.⁵ But Mainz was too important to both Urban and Wenceslaus, and Adolf was found to be willing to return to the Urbanists, if the coveted archbishopric should be acknowledged by both pope and emperor. Urban saw the importance of a united Germany, and in January, 1381, Adolf was virtually recognized by Wenceslaus and the kingdom. Wenceslaus also looked after the disappointed Ludwig by making him archbishop of Magdeburg soon after.⁶ There was no direct occasion, therefore, in the "affair of Mayence" for breaking the match with Anne. Pelzel must be in error in his statement of the breaking off of the betrothal for this reason. While rancor was engendered, perhaps, there is no evidence of a formal breaking of the engagement.

Meanwhile, the new alignment of the nations, resulting from the papal schism, had brought new complications. Pope Urban was using every endeavor to win over the largest following, and bind the nations to himself with the closest bonds. On his part, Clement

¹ *Essays on Chaucer*, p. 407.

² Lindner, I, 23.

³ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 30, 63-64, 312-13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 103-4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 120-21, 133.

VII was doing his best to unite France and Germany.¹ If, therefore, Urban did not suggest the marriage of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, he used all his influence to further that match, and so make impossible any terms between Wenceslaus and France, the latter now fully supporting the schismatic pope. As early as May 20, 1379, probably at the instigation of the papal nuncio, Cardinal Pileus de Prata, Wenceslaus had written to Richard proposing an alliance against schismatics.² This was the beginning of that more intimate relation between England and Bohemia, which resulted in Anne's betrothal to the English king.

Such betrothal, and the marriage which followed, brought the virtual, though not the formal, abrogation of the engagement of Anne and Friedrich of Meissen. The latter was still only one, though the eldest, son of Friedrich of Thuringia, and helpless we may assume to press his claim against the powerful brothers of Anne, Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia and emperor, and Sigmund, king of Hungary.³ His betrothal was therefore merely set aside for the greater match, now placed within the power of Wenceslaus and strongly urged by the pope. Nor is there evidence of any arrangement for settling the definite claim which, owing to the terms of the betrothal, Friedrich of Meissen still had upon the emperor.

The best evidence that the betrothal of Anne and Friedrich was never formally abrogated is the attitude of the Thuringian house in the later affairs of the empire. Then the representatives of that house did not forget the double slight placed upon them, first by Wenceslaus's failure to support Bishop Ludwig of Bamberg for the archbishopric of Mainz, and second by his disregard of the long-standing marriage contract.⁴ At the death of Friedrich of Thuringia in 1381, Friedrich, the betrothed of Anne, became Margrave of Meissen, and began that strenuous career which gave him the name of "der Streitbare," "the Warlike." More than once he opposed the emperor Wenceslaus, until, in 1397, in connection with the strug-

¹ Lindner, I, 118. Speaking of this Lindner says: "Denn man hatte in Rom besseres im Sinne. Die Pläne der Avignonesen, den deutschen König durch eine Familienverbindung mit Frankreich zu liiren, mussten durchkreuzt werden."

² Höfler, 127; Lindner, I, 95.

³ The part of Sigmund of Hungary is vouched for in the chronicles cited by Horn, 83.

⁴ Lindner, I, 133; II, 190.

gle between Wenceslaus and Jobst of Moravia, the old debt incurred at his betrothal to Anne was wiped out. In that year the warlike Margrave took from Wenceslaus the two towns, Brûx and Laun, which had been pledged for Anne's dower.¹

Still later, in 1409, when Wenceslaus arbitrarily took from the Germans a large part of their authority at the University of Prague and the German students seceded, Friedrich helped to welcome them, and to found for their use the University of Leipsic.² Thus was the Emperor Wenceslaus doubly humbled for his disregard of the marriage contract between Anne and Friedrich of Meissen. It is of incidental interest that Friedrich remained unmarried all these years, not taking a wife until 1402, when he married a daughter of Henry the "Mild." He became, too, a notable prince. In 1423 he won for himself the electorate of Saxony, a dignity which thus became permanently attached to his house.

If, then, the betrothal of Friedrich was never formally broken, but merely set aside by Anne's imperial brother, Friedrich may reasonably be regarded as one of the rivals of Richard in the allegory of the *Parlement of Foules*. Should we try to identify him with one of the "tercel" suitors of the "formel egle," it would naturally be with the second mentioned in the poem, "another tercel egle . . . of lower kinde."³ As compared with that of the "royal tercel," too, the profession of this second suitor would also apply with striking aptness:

I love hir bet than ye do, by Seynt John,

And lenger have served hir, in my degree;
And if she shulde have loved for long loving,
To me allone had been the guerdoning.⁴

¹ My attention was first called to this and the following circumstance by my friend Professor George L. Burr of Cornell University. The passage from Horn occurs on 351 f. Horn writes: "Es bekräftiget mich hierinn eine Verschreibung, welche ihm der König auf Unterhandlung des Bischoffs zu Bamberg und Margraff Wilhelms des ältern, seines Vettern zu der Zeit Donnerst. vor S. Galli pro redimenda vexa über Brûx und Lune gegeben, weñ die vormaln 1373 zwischen dessen Schwester Annen und ihm abgeredete Ehe-Pacten nicht in ihre Erfüllung gegangen, und gleichwohl man sich bey entstehender Vollziehung Königlicher selts eventualiter anheischig gemacht, die versprochene Heyrathsgelder an 10,000 Schock nichts desto weniger zu bezahlen, als oben bereits mit mehrern referiret worden, auch Churfürst Friedrich die davon versessen Zinsen, so wohl aufgewandte Kosten, Schäden und Zehrung nicht länger darben wolte." He quotes an annalist to the same effect on p. 128, under the year 1397.

² Horn, 301 f.

³ Ll. 449-50.

⁴ Ll. 451-55.

Surely, if these lines have more than general significance, they describe one to whom Anne had been betrothed for many years, and who, before the negotiations with England, had no reason to believe that his long engagement would not be followed by marriage.

But Chaucer, as we know, introduces a third suitor for the "formel egle," or Anne of Bohemia. I propose to show that there was such a suitor, entirely disregarded in any previous discussion of the subject, but far more active than even Friedrich of Meissen, and a far more worthy rival of Richard II himself.¹ Moreover, there can be no doubt that Chaucer knew of him, however little he may have known of Anne's engagements to the German princes. I shall hope to show, also, that the language used by the third suitor is appropriate to this new rival of the young Richard. The way in which he came to be suitor for the hand of Anne will be clearer from some elements of the history of the time.

When the papal schism occurred at the election of Clement VII in September, 1378, the rival popes began a vigorous campaign for supporters. Charles IV, king of Bohemia and emperor of the Romans, as he called himself, held firmly to the Roman pope. Perhaps he was partly led thereto by the relation of the pope to his imperial title.² Charles, however, did not outlive the year of the schism, dying less than three months after the election of Clement. His son Wenceslaus, brother of Anne and a youth of only seventeen when he succeeded his father, was likely to be more easily influenced. As a result each pope sent him his messenger. Clement dispatched Bishop John of Cambray November 5, 1378,³ and in March, 1379, when returning from Frankfort, Wenceslaus was met by Cardinal Pileus de Prata of Ravenna,⁴ who had been commissioned to him as papal nuncio. Pileus made haste to impress upon the young emperor that to accept the schismatic Clement would be to make his father a heretic.⁵ On the other hand, for Wenceslaus to support Urban

¹ But see article "Richard II," *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*

² He had obtained the title "emperor of the Romans" in 1346, but had not been crowned at Rome until 1354, and then only after pledging Pope Innocent VI that he would leave the imperial city the same day. Now, however, he wished acknowledgment of his claim, and he was recognized as emperor by Urban on July 26, 1378.

³ Lindner, I, 102, note.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 94.

⁵ Höfler, 130; Lindner, I, 113.

meant severing the long-standing alliance with France.¹ That alliance had been more recently strengthened by his father. On January 9, 1378, upon a visit to Paris, Charles IV had spoken out unmistakably for France in her contention with England, and had pledged his son, his other children, all his relatives, his allies and friends, and his whole power to her support.² In the latter relation of ally of France, Clement VII saw an opportunity to influence Wenceslaus. He therefore urged a union between Bohemia and France, to be rendered firm by a marriage of the Dauphin with Wenceslaus's sister Anne.

Charles V of France was also eager for such an alliance on grounds of general advantage to his kingdom. He had already sent a commission to the Diet of Frankfort in 1379, and a year later he still had hopes of success in his efforts.³ The subject of the marriage, even, had been broached. Of it the French historian Valois says:

Durant un séjour de Wenceslas à Aix-la-Chapelle, on avait parlé d'un mariage entre le dauphin, fils du roi de France, et Anne de Luxembourg, sœur du roi des Romains. Une entrevue devait avoir lieu entre Charles V et Wenceslas. . . . La cour d'Avignon comptait beaucoup sur le résultat de cette conférence. Entre autres personnages qui promettaient de s'y rendre, je citerai les envoyés du roi de Portugal et, à leur tête, l'évêque de Lisbonne, qui déjà préparait le discours avec lequel il devait convertir Wenceslas. Cette entrevue n'eut pas lieu: le roi des Romains, tournant le dos à Reims, reprit la route de Cologne. Il se fit, il est vrai, représenter à Paris par quatre ambassadeurs; mais l'acte, sans doute rédigé d'avance, dont ces derniers étaient porteurs ne traitait que du renouvellement des alliances entre les deux maisons, sans souffler mot de mariage du dauphin avec la bohémienne Anne.⁴

This journey of Wenceslaus to Aix-la-Chapelle was after the Frankfort Diet of April, 1380.⁵ As late as that time, therefore, the emperor

¹ Recall that the blind king of Bohemia, John of Luxemburg, had lost his life at Crécy in 1346, fighting as an ally of France; that his daughter, Maria of Luxemburg, was to become the wife of Charles IV of France, while his daughter Bona became the wife of King John "the Good," and so mother of Charles V. Wenceslaus and Charles V of France were thus first cousins.

² Höfler, 126.

³ Valois, *La France et le grand schisme d'occident*, I, 269.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 300. As authorities for this statement Valois cites a "Lettre du cardinal de Viviers aux cardinaux de Florence et de Milan," Baluzius, II, 869; and his own edition of the "Discours prononcé le 14 juillet 1380, en présence de Charles V, par Martin l'évêque de Lisbonne," in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, LII, 495, 500.

⁵ Lindner, I, 114, 116, 433.

was still considering the possible betrothal of his sister Anne and the heir of the French throne. Indeed, we must not assume that at any time the young Wenceslaus was distinctly hostile to his cousin, Charles V of France, or the latter's son, the prince who became Charles VI in September, 1380. As an evidence of the intimate relations between the two, Froissart tells us that, when Charles V of France was ill in the summer before his death, Wenceslaus sent his own physician, George of Prague, to treat him.¹ It was rather the papal situation which finally caused the severing of such relations of alliance as had long existed between the two countries.

To defeat such an alliance of Wenceslaus and France was now the chief purpose of Pope Urban. England had already accepted him as pope in the Gloucester parliament of October-November, 1378. There was, perhaps, no fear of losing her allegiance. If Germany was equally certain to remain loyal, it was still important to bind together the nations supporting Urban by a firmer league against the schismatics. It was probably at the suggestion of the papal nuncio that Wenceslaus first proposed to Richard II, in May, 1379, an alliance in support of Urban.² This was shortly after a Diet at Frankfort, on February 27, 1379, in which a league of German princes had been formed for the same purpose. In furtherance of union between Germany and England, it would seem, the same papal nuncio, Cardinal Pileus de Prata, went to the latter country in 1380.³ Moreover, it was probably he who first suggested the marriage of Richard with a German princess.⁴ At any rate, it was in the same June, 1380, that Richard definitely turned his eyes to such a possible alliance.⁵ Peace with France having been found impossible, the

¹ *Chronicles*, II, chap. iv; *Johnes*, I, 615.

² See p. 5.

³ He was there at least as early as June, since on the seventh of that month he obtained from Richard II certain rights to revenues in connection with Lichfield and Lincoln cathedrals; *Rymer's Fadera*, VII, 256.

⁴ An entry in *Issues of the Exchequer* (Devon, 224) of January 9, 1384, would imply that the marriage of Richard and Anne was perhaps considered somewhat earlier than June, 1380. I have dealt with that in another place, but, if the inferences from that entry are wholly true, they do not materially affect this paper.

⁵ *Rymer*, VII, 257. The person first named in the commission, as already noted, was "Katherine, daughter of Ludwig, recently emperor of the Romans." The emperor Ludwig of Bavaria, however, had died in 1347, so that his daughter would have been more than twice the age of Richard. No adequate explanation has been given of this proposal, or of the sudden change to Anne, the sister of Wenceslaus, a little later. Could it be that, as the king of France is known to have wished Anne for his son, afterward

councilors of the young king wished him to marry abroad that he might obtain an ally in the long-drawn-out war with France.¹

Meanwhile the king of France, probably urged on by Clement VII, was more active for a league with his old-time ally in Germany. In the summer of 1380 he learned of the English negotiations for a marriage of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia. Even though soon stricken with the disease which brought his death on September 16, his sagacity emphasized the importance of the German league. On his death-bed he said to his courtiers: "Seek out in Germany an alliance for my son, that our connections there may be strengthened. You have heard that our adversary is about to marry from thence to increase his alliance."²

There is also evidence that these negotiations were carried on after the death of Charles V and the accession of Charles VI. The marriage of Anne with Charles was urged by the Clementists as the only way of winning Wenceslaus and Germany to their side.³ A letter from Cardinal Peter de Sortenac implies that actual negotiations were under way. He says:

Nec est spes eum [Wenceslaus] pro nunc revocandi, nisi per tractatum matrimonii, qui pendet de sorore sua danda regi Francie, in quo tractatu speratur, quod possit informari de justitia domini nostri, et de præservatione fame et honoris patris sui mortui, et per consequens reduci.⁴

We have also the testimony to the same effect of the English chronicler, Adam of Usk. Speaking of Cardinal Pileus de Prata, whose notary in London he was, Adam says: "After his departure the said Lady Anne was bought for a price by our lord the king, for she was much sought in marriage by the king of France."⁵

Charles VI, Wenceslaus was hoping to ally himself with France by the marriage of his sister, and with England by the marriage of his aunt? In any case an explanation is not necessary for our immediate purpose.

¹ Froissart, *Chronicles*, II, chap. xliii; Johnes, I, 592-93: "The Englich . . . wished the king to choose a queen from beyond sea, in order to gain stronger alliances."

² Froissart, *Chronicles*, II, chap. lv; Johnes, I, 616.

³ Höfler, 130. Lindner, I, 113: "Die einzige Hoffnung, Wenzel zur Umkehr zu bewegen, läge in jetzt schwebenden Verhandlungen über die Ehe zwischen seiner Schwester und dem Könige von Frankreich."

⁴ Quoted by Höfler (130) from Baluzius, *Vita Paparum Avinionensium*, II, 869. The last clause refers to the fear of Wenceslaus that, if he recognized Clement, it would make a heretic of his father, who had died in the full acceptance of Urban's election.

⁵ *Chronicon Ada de Usk*, ed. by Thompson, 102. The original reads: "Post cujus recessum dicta domina Anna, per dominum regem magno precio redempta, quia a rege Francie in uxorem affectata."

Even as late as the early part of 1381 Wenceslaus had sent an embassy to France, nominally to urge Charles VI to support Urban as the true pope. The French historian Valois suggests that, while this may have been prompted by zeal for the church, it was possibly also to further, by indirection, the marriage project with Richard.¹ The ambassadors reached Paris March 10, and even if they did not discuss, so late as this, the possible marriage of Anne with the French king, the English may have feared as much and have therefore still considered the French king as the rival of Richard.

From the foregoing recital it is clear that the most active rival of Richard II for the hand of Anne of Bohemia was not a German prince at all, but the far more important heir to the French throne, and king of France before the negotiations were concluded. Behind him, too, were the close ties of blood between the reigning monarchs of France and Bohemia, the traditional friendship of the two countries, the recently renewed league between the father of Wenceslaus and Charles V of France, and the power of Clement VII and of his supporters in the French church. The strength of the French desire for an alliance with the emperor of the Romans may perhaps best be seen in the strength of French resentment, when the decision in favor of Richard had been made, and the young princess Anne was on her way to England. It is Froissart who tells the story:

The Lady Anne of Bohemia remained with her uncle and aunt at Brussels upwards of a month. She was afraid of moving, for she had been informed there were twelve large armed vessels, full of Normans, on the sea between Calais and Holland, that seized and pillaged all that fell into their hands, and it was indifferent to them who they were. The report was current, that they cruised in those seas waiting for the coming of this lady; and that the king of France and his council were desirous of carrying her off, in order to break the match, for they were very uneasy at this alliance of the Germans and the English. . . . On account of these suspicions and fears, the young lady remained at Brussels one whole month. The Duke of Brabant, by advice of his council, sent to France the Lords de Rousselans and de Bousquehois, to remonstrate on this subject with the king and his uncles, who were also his nephews [that is, nephews of Duke Wenceslaus of Brabant], being his sister's sons.

The knights of Brabant managed so well with the king and his coun-

¹ *La France et le grand schisme d'occident*, II, 274.

cil that their request was complied with, and passports granted for the lady and her attendants to travel through any parts of France she might choose, as far as Calais. The Normans were remanded into port. This answer the knights carried to Brabant to the duke and duchess. The king and his uncles wrote to say, they had granted the favor to their cousin, the Lady Anne, at their solicitation alone, and for no other reason whatever.¹

The clause, "for they were very uneasy at this alliance of the Germans and the English," is full proof of the serious efforts the French had made to continue their friendly relations with Germany. The last expression, regarding the passports granted, shows the resentment of the young king and his royal uncles toward the successful suitor Richard.

Perhaps, too, the knowledge that his chief rival for the hand of Anne was his enemy, the French king, may have influenced Richard in so eagerly seeking the Bohemian alliance. Possibly this was the reason also why Wenceslaus could make such excellent terms with the English king, giving no dowry with the princess, but rather obtaining for himself an enormous loan.² Again this eagerness, and the vast sum which Wenceslaus secured, may explain the distinctly critical tone of several chroniclers in referring to the marriage. We have already noted Adam of Usk's expression, "the said Lady Anne was bought for a price." The *Chronicon Angliæ* says:³

Hanc [Anne] igitur magno pretio, multisque coemptam laboribus, habendam rex præelegerat, quamquam cum inæstimabili auri summa oblata fuisset et filia domini Mediolanensis Barnabonis.

¹ *Chronicles*, II, chap. lxxxvi; Johnes, I, 681. C. G. Chamberlayne, *Die Heirat Richards II von England mit Anna von Luxemburg* (Halle, 1906), undertakes to discredit Froissart's account of Anne's delay in Brussels and his statement of the French king's designs. The explicitness of the account, however, the number of details, especially the mission to the French king from Wenceslaus of Brabant, his great uncle, and the character of the answer, bear heavily for Froissart's accuracy, or, if the tale is manufactured, for needlessly clever mendacity. For our purpose, even the report in England of such a train of circumstances would have been sufficient to support the idea of the French king's rivalry for the hand of Anne. Besides, if the whole of Froissart's account be brushed aside as a tissue of falsehood, it would not affect the preceding line of reasoning. The discussion of Chamberlayne, however, has not convinced me that Froissart had not good ground for his circumstantial statement.

² The documents are in Rymer, VII, 288 f. Wenceslaus received 80,000 florins as a loan, 20,000 of which were not to be returned, as covering the expenses of the negotiations for the marriage and of Anne in reaching England. Besides, there were enormous gifts to those assisting in the negotiations; see the paper to which I refer above on p. 1.

³ See p. 331; Rolls Series, 64, 331.

The writer of the Continuation to the *Eulogium Historiarum* adds another criticism:¹

Hoc anno Rex Annam sororem Imperatoris, Regis scilicet Bohemie, solutis pro ea 22 m[illia] marcis, sine consensu regni, desponsavit.

To these may be added two other notes. The *Chronicon Henrici Knighton*² has this to say:

Eodem anno apud Westmonasterium rex Ricardus desponsavit Annam, filiam regis Boemi, Sororem Imperatoris, et dedit imperatori ut dicabatur pro maritagio decem mille libras præter alias expensas in quærendo eam et adducendo eam sumptibus suis propriis.

Finally John Malvern, in his continuation of Higden's *Polychronicon* adds the more biting comment:

De ista regina quidam scripsit metricè,

Digna frui manna datur Anglis nobilis Anna,
sed scrutantibus verum videbatur non dari, sed potius emi. Nam non modica pecunia refundebat rex Angliæ pro tantilla carnis portione.³

Thus, it is clear that some at least felt Richard had made a bad bargain. Nor can there be much doubt that, considering the results to the nation as a whole, England paid an enormous price for her queen and her rather profitless alliance.

If this new aspirant for the hand of Anne is to be considered, it is natural to ask how far the language of Chaucer's third suitor of the "formel egle" will fit the case. I recognize that we must not try to see too much, and the main point is made in emphasizing the rivalry of Charles VI and Richard II. Yet the third suitor may not unreasonably be identified with the young king of France. For example the words,

Of long servise avaunte I me no-thing,⁴

would be peculiarly applicable. As already shown, it was in the spring of 1380 that there had first been talk of a marriage of Anne and the Dauphin of France.⁵ It was not until September that

¹ Rolls Series, 9, III, 355. The matter seems to have been wholly arranged by Richard's council, without consulting parliament until on December 13, 1381, Richard asked for a grant of money because of his approaching marriage with Anne (*Rotuli Parliamentorum*, III, 104a). The result of the discussion attending this request of Richard was the appointment of Michael de la Pole and Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, as governors of the person of the king and constant counselors (*Ibid.*, III, 104b).

² *Ibid.*, 92, p. 150.

³ Higden's *Polychronicon* (Rolls Series), IX, 12.

⁴ *Parlement of Foules*, l. 470.

⁵ See p. 8.

Charles could have been a suitor in his own right as king. Even the words,

A man may serven bet and more to pay
In half a yere, although hit were no more,¹

could scarcely have been better chosen, if they had been definitely intended for the young Charles. Indeed, it was scarcely more than a half-year from the accession of Charles in September, 1380, to the signing of the marriage treaty in London, May 1, 1381. Or, it was but about half a year from June, 1380, when the English negotiations and the French activity in the matter began, until the betrothal to Richard was virtually decided upon.

Again, has Chaucer, with such circumstances in mind as I have noted, intended to reflect the hopelessness of Charles VI's wooing? Even the beginning of the speech is that of one who feels he has no chance:

Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here,
And eek Nature hirself ne wol noght here,
For taryng here, noght half that I wolde seye.²

Nor could the poet have chosen more appropriate words than those at the beginning of the last stanza:

I ne say this by me, for I ne can
Do no servyse that may my lady plese;
But I dar seyn I am hir trewest man
As to my dome, and feynest wolde hir ese.³

Whether these last suggestions are equally interpretative, it must be admitted that the notes of time in the speeches of the last two suitors have significant parallelism in the long betrothal of Friedrich of Meissen, and the short period during which Charles VI was considered a suitor. Moreover, the short period mentioned in the last speech would far more aptly fit the case of Charles VI than the two-year betrothal of William of Baiern-Holland, which had been broken off seven years before, even if that betrothal could have been in Chaucer's mind.

It might be objected to the identification of the "thridde tercel

¹ Ll. 474-75.

² Ll. 464, 467-68.

³ Ll. 477-80. The manners of a ruder age almost suggest that there may be here a less elegant slight upon the prowess of the young Charles, a boy little over eleven years of age in May, 1380, when his marriage with Anne was first considered.

egle" as Charles VI of France, that he too should have been called "royal" as was the first tercel, representing Richard. Yet to this objection I believe there are several good answers. In the first place it may be assumed, as Mr. Pollard at least does,¹ that all the eagles of this first choice of a mate are royal. It is true, Chaucer says of the birds as a whole in the garden,

Ther mighte men the royal egle finde
That with his sharpe look perceth the sonne;
And other egles of a lower kinde.²

When, however, we come to the choice of mates, Nature says to all the birds:

The tercel egle, as that ye knowen wel,
The foul royal above yow in degree,
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

And after him, by order shul ye chese
After your kinde, everych as yow lyketh.³

Now the "tercel egle," "the foul royal," is here used for a class, of which there are three representatives in contest for "the formel." This must be clear, I think, from the last two lines, which refer not to the choice of the other two tercel, but to that of the other kinds of birds. Nor would it have been at all flattering to Anne, England's new queen, if two of those who wooed her were not of royal or princely rank. Besides, the "formel egle" is herself not called "royal," although we can hardly believe she is not to be so regarded.⁴

But if this answer to the point is not sufficient, it would be easy to propose others. It might be pointed out that, in the case of this third eagle, Chaucer makes no indication of rank whatever. If he does not designate him as of high rank, neither does he call him "of lower kinde," as in the case of the second suitor, who was at least a German prince. Again, while to us it would seem natural to elevate Richard's rival, in order to make the choice of the English king a greater honor, the jealousy of France and the

¹ Chaucer ("Literature Primer") 89.

² Ll. 330-32.

³ Ll. 393-94, 399-401.

⁴ It might be said that the royal tercel's words,
"Unto my sovereyn lady, and noght my fere,
I chese,"

are intended to imply Anne's rank as sister of an emperor, but these need be regarded as no more than the common flattery of the lover.

French king may easily have prevented it at such a time. Still further, to Englishmen since Edward III's time, there had been but one "king of France," that is, he who sat on their own throne, king of England and of France, as he regularly styled himself. To have called the "thridde egle" specifically royal might have seemed in some sense to acknowledge the right of Charles VI to that realm which the English king claimed as his by inheritance.¹ Finally, there was some reason for not exalting the position of the French king in his exact status at this time. When he came to the throne in September, 1380, Charles VI was a boy of not quite twelve. At the death of his father his unscrupulous uncles, the dukes of Anjou, Berry, and Burgundy, virtually seized all power, as the first had also seized all the jewels of his dead brother, Charles V.² The young king was helpless in their hands, scarcely more than a figure-head in the kingdom. These circumstances, in themselves, would be sufficient to account for the reference to the third suitor as merely "the thridde tercel egle."³

There is one other phase of the whole situation that may now receive a more interesting interpretation, it seems to me. In his valuable essays Professor Koch had emphasized a clause of Wenceslaus's biographer Pelzel,⁴ in its relation to the free choice which Nature granted to the "formel egle."⁵ That clause was "and as Princess Anne had already reached the age to choose herself a

¹ As some indication of the importance attached to merely verbal acknowledgment of the French king it may be noted that such recognition was carefully avoided in the state documents of the time. The French king is usually referred to as "our adversary of France," as in the case of the commissioners appointed to treat for peace in 1379 and April, 1380 (*De Tractando cum Adversario Francia*). Even more interesting is the expression in the case of the commissioners appointed August 16, 1382, to treat with Wenceslaus for an offensive league against France. The document is called *De Tractando cum Rege Romanorum et Boemia super Ligis et Amicitia*, and the alliance was to be "Specialiter, in specialibus, contra Karolum Modernum occupatorem Regni Francie."—Rymer, VII, 365.

² Froissart, *Chronicles*, II, chap. lxxvii; Johnes, I, 617.

³ It is interesting to note the youth of all the parties to this royal courtship and European alliance. In June, 1380, when the negotiations between England and Bohemia began, Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia and emperor of the Romans, was a little more than nineteen, having been born February 26, 1361. Richard was just beyond fourteen, if born April 13, 1366, or thirteen, if that event occurred January 6 or February 26, 1367. Anne was also fourteen, as she was born May 11, 1366, and Charles VI, youngest of all, was not born until December 3, 1368. Perhaps the extreme youth of all the persons makes doubly appropriate the allegory connecting the union of two of them with the mating of birds.

⁴ *Englische Studien*, I, 288; *Essays on Chaucer*, 407.

⁵ *Li*. 645 f.

husband." Professor Koch thinks this alludes to Anne's "coming of age," as he calls it, explained by his footnote, "That is, I suppose, 14."¹ Pelzel has apparently based his remark on the fact that the documents of the marriage contract show Anne to have appointed ambassadors to treat with Richard. While this is so, however, we must remember that Anne's mother, Elizabeth, gave her parental consent, her imperial brother appointed the same ambassadors, and Anne herself distinctly says she had acted by the advice of her brother and mother.²

Whether these facts detract from Professor Koch's interpretation or not, there is another and much broader sense in which Anne had now a free choice, and on account of which she might make some demands in her own right. Not only was the notable prince who became Friedrich, first elector of Saxony, hers by betrothal, but two kings of two of the most powerful nations of western Europe were at her feet. Each wished her, not as queen only, but for the far-reaching alliance with her imperial brother which union with her would bring. Each was deserving in himself, Richard, the passionate lover, and Charles, soon to be known as the "well-beloved." It is little wonder that, with such opportunities the modest "formel egle," which had blushed her pleasure at the lover-like speech of the "royal tereel," should soon after pluck up courage to say:

Almighty quene, unto this yeer be doon
I aske respit for to avysen me,
And after that to have my choys al free.³

It is this unusual freedom of choice now in Anne's power to which these last lines of the poem may well refer. At least, such interpretation dignifies what otherwise has often seemed a lame conclusion to this beautiful poem. Anne could well afford to take her time, as it is fairly clear that her imperial brother or his advisers intended to do, until she could satisfy herself as to the advantages of this English proposal. Indeed, I have shown in another paper that the duke of Tetschen visited England in 1380 to see that far-away country, as it must have seemed, and decide whether Anne

¹ *Essays on Chaucer*, 408.

² Rymer, VII, 293: "Ad concilia, requisitiones, necnon inductiones Serenissimi Principis, Domini Wenceslai, Romanorum et Boemie Regis, Domini et Fratris nostri pertinendi, necnon Serenissime Principis, Domine Elizabethæ, Romanorum Imperatricis et Regine Boemie, Domine et Matris nostre carissime."

³ Ll. 647-49.

could profitably unite her fortunes with those of the English king.¹

Perhaps it is fair to add, also, that such deliberation as Anne showed and such delay as she requested before her final choice may well be symbolic of the long-continued and minutely careful negotiations attending the great alliance of which her marriage was a part. That alliance not only broke, for the first time in many years, the traditional friendship of Bohemia and France, but it was intimately connected with the widespread league of nations for the support of Pope Urban VI in the great schism, and was confidently looked upon by Englishmen as strengthening their country's hands against her long-time adversary, France. The delay of a year, too, which has usually been regarded as mere dilatoriness, is thus dignified by the many considerations entering into the formation of this far-reaching European alliance.

The foregoing study makes clear, it is hoped, that some considerable revision is necessary in the usual explanation of the suitors in the *Parlement of Foules*. It has been shown that the betrothal of Friedrich of Meissen with Anne of Bohemia was never formally broken; that, at her engagement to Richard II of England, it was still in force, so far as any agreement to its abrogation is concerned; that on this account Friedrich may be regarded as an actual rival of the young English king; and that the words of the second suitor for the "formel egle" in the poem would especially well apply to his long courtship. It has also been made clear that, after the papal schism, there was an attempt to bring about a betrothal of Anne of Bohemia and Charles, son of King Charles V of France; that this union was desired by the French king and urged by the schismatic pope, Clement VII; that, according to the English chronicler, Adam of Usk, the young Charles, when becoming king in 1380, was a more active suitor for the hand of Anne; and that the words of the third suitor in the poem have special aptness as applied to him. The latter, therefore, of whom in such relation Chaucer would certainly have had knowledge, is far more likely to have been in his mind than that Prince of Bavaria whose betrothal to the future queen of England had been broken off in 1373.

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¹ See the paper mentioned on p. 1, above.

"LE FABLEL DOU DIEU D'AMORS"

The *Fabel dou dieu d'amors* was published in 1834 by A. Jubinal. This edition, which is now difficult to obtain, offers an inaccurate and sometimes unintelligible text due to misreading of the manuscript or careless printing. The importance of the poem, not from its literary worth but from the place commonly assigned to it in the history of allegory and especially because of E. Langlois' statement that from it Guillaume de Lorris took the framework of the *Roman de la Rose*,¹ justifies a more accurate and more easily accessible edition.

The poem is found in the well-known manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale, *nouv. fonds fr.* 1553 (anc. 7595) and extends from fol. 521 *verso*, col. 2, to fol. 524 *verso*, col. 1. The manuscript has been described several times with list of contents² and has been dated by Paul Meyer³ on evidence of the contents between 1258 and 1296, and by Schum,⁴ on paleographic evidence, in the early part of the second half of the thirteenth century. The poem has been discussed by Foerster and carefully compared with *Venus la deesse d'amour* in his edition of the latter. On p. 45 Foerster gives a list of the passages borrowed directly from the *Fabel* by the author of the *Venus*.

In the following text I have not called attention to the places where Jubinal's reading differs from mine. Many of these cases are of the character of *son* for *sen*, *apres* for *apries*, *trait* for *tint*, simple cases of misreading or arbitrary change. I have retained the orthography of the manuscript and have written *nos*, *vos*, *molt* for the abbreviations of these words, retaining the few cases where *nous*, *vous* were written out. The addition of accents will facilitate reading. Words or letters to be omitted are placed in parenthesis; those to be supplied, in brackets. All other changes in the text are indicated in the foot-notes. I am indebted to Professor T. Atkinson Jenkins for assistance in preparing the text for the printer.

The dialect of the copyist is Picard and shows the ordinary traits of that dialect. Since the Picard dialect has been the subject of

¹ *Origines et Sources du Roman de la Rose*, 32 ff.

² Michel, *Roman de la Violette*, xli. Michelant, *Catalogue des MSS. français de la Bibliothèque Impériale* I, 248 ff.; Zotenberg und Meyer, *Barlaam und Josaphat*, 229-35.

³ *Romania*, XIII, 629-30.

⁴ Grüber's *Grundriss*, I, 226.

several careful studies, it would seem useless to repeat here with examples facts already well known. The large number of cases where *e* in position is represented by *ie* would point to Hainaut as the probable home of the copyist. As to the language of the author, the following results of an examination of the rhymes and meter may be noted:

1. *e* (from *a*) and *e* do not rhyme.
2. *e* and *ie* do not rhyme.
3. Nasal *e* and nasal *a* do not rhyme, with exception of str. 115, where the correction is evident.
4. *ai* final, or before oral consonant, rhymes only with itself.
5. *e* in position rhymes only with itself, not with *ai*. This makes it probable that the author, as well as the copyist, belonged to the *ie* region. In str. 73 we have *siere* (*serre*): *querre*: *conquerre*: *guerre*. *Querre* is found in the form *quierre* (*Chev. as deus espees*, 1515); *guierre* is not found, as far as I know, but Tobler (*Vrai aniel*, p. xxii, note) gives *wiere* and *wierre* as found in contemporary northern documents, and *wiere* is found in a Tournay document of 1385 (Godefroy). I have, therefore, not corrected *siere* to *serre* as Foerster suggests.
6. *oi*, with open *o*, is found in rhyme with *oi* from *ei*, str. 90. *Oi* with close *o* does not appear in rhyme.
7. *au* is not found in rhyme with *iau* nor with *o*. Str. 72 rhymes *faus* (*fagus*) with *au* (*al* plus cons.) proving vocalization of *l*.
8. *eu*, *iu*, *ieu* do not appear in rhyme.
9. *ie* for *iêe* is found in str. 91, *maisnie*: *legerie*: *hahatie*, and *prisie*, 104b.
10. The forms *averai* 47d, *estera* 33d, *sir* 123c, are proved by the meter; *veir* 50b, by the rhyme.
11. Unaccented *e* before a vowel counts usually as a syllable: *dëussent* 29a, *vëoir* 105c, *rechëus* 93a, *mëure* 22b, etc. The *e* has fallen in *juners* 46b, *sir* 123c.
12. *ch* appears in rhyme only in str. 122, *manache*: *place*: *cache*: *embrache*, words which rhyme equally well in Picard and French and prove nothing.
13. *ts* is reduced to *s*: str. 35, *petis*: *nis*: *delis*: *miedis*, and 23, *assis*: *cris*: *raemplis*: *paradis*.

14. Isolated *t* is kept by the copyist in *fondut* 13*d*, *foit* 76*b*. The rhymes (20) *contredit: crit: dit: fit* and (76) *estoit: foit: droit: droit* would seem to prove that this *t* had not yet fallen in the language of the author. On the other hand, we find strophes in which words with original *t* rhyme with words which have never had a *t* (47, 134, 138, 142). The poet was probably familiar with both Picard and French usages and employed both.

15. The Picard form of the possessives *vo* 68*a*, *no* 119*d*, is proved by the meter.

16. *-els* rhymes only with itself, not with *-als*.

17. Latin *o+j* gives *ui*, 119.

18. *ě+i* gives *i*, not *ei*: str. 4, *lit: delit: petit: rist*.

19. Str. 22, *nœuvre: honeure: aseure*, rhymes Latin *ũ* with Latin *õ*. Cf. Foerster, *Venus*, p. 50.

The combination of the traits given in 3, 6, 9, 13, 15 makes it clear that the author also was a Picard; if we may add 5 (*ie* for *e*) as a probable trait of the author, we can place the poem more definitely in the region of Hainaut.

The meter of the poem is the ten-syllable, with masculine or feminine pause after the fourth syllable, arranged in monorime quatrains. This strophe has been little used in narrative poetry, but seems to have enjoyed favor about the middle and latter half of the thirteenth century.¹ The choice of this strophe would be an argument rather against than in favor of placing the poem in the early years of the thirteenth century.

An examination of the contents leads to the conclusion that the *Fablel* is not an original production but a combination and working over of probably two other poems. The author himself indicates the division in str. 37:

Chou qu'orent dit li oysiel recordai,
Tout en dormant, c'onques ne m'esvellai.
Apriés che songe, autre songe songai;
Donne me a boire, je le vos conterai.

Up to this point the poem consists of the description of the garden, and the discussion by the birds of the question of the *vilain* versus the *clerc* and the *chevalier* in matters of love. This was doubtless

¹ Cf. Naetebus, *Die nicht-lyrischen Strophenformen*, 54-56.

the first form of the question which was later narrowed to the debate on the relative worth of the *clerc* and the *chevalier*, and became a commonplace in mediaeval literature. This second form of the discussion we find in William of Poitiers:

Domnas i a de mal conselh,
 E sai dir cals:
 Cellas c'amor de cavalier
 Tornon a mals.
 Domna fai gran pechat mortal
 Qe no ama cavalier leal,
 Mas si es monges o clergal
 Non a raizo.
 Per dreg la deuri' hom cremar
 Ab un tezo.

—Ed. Jeanroy, V, 3-12.

In Latin we have the *Council of Remiremont*,¹ which Paul Meyer² considers the oldest example but which belongs perhaps to the latter half of the twelfth century,³ the *Altercatio Phillidis et Florae*⁴ (twelfth?), and a discussion in *André le Chapelain*; in French, *Hueline et Eglantine*,⁵ *Florance et Blancheflor*,⁶ *Melior et Idoine*,⁷ and *La Geste de Blanchefleur et de Florence*,⁸ the last two in Anglo-Norman. With none of these poems has the *Fablel* any direct connection, unless it be *Florance et Blancheflor*, with which it has some rather striking points of resemblance.⁹ That these resemblances are due to direct imitation, I do not believe.

The second part of the poem, which describes the lover's visit to the castle of the God of Love, contains some descriptions which at first sight give hope of bringing the poem into close connection with other poems. These are,

a) The description of the God of Love:

Tous ses chevaus estoit couvers de flors,
 Molt en i ot de diverses coulors;
 De son mantiel est li traime d'amors
 Et li estains estoit de may vers jours.

¹ *Zeits. für deutsches Alterthum*, VII (1849), 160-67.

² *Romania*, XV, 333.

³ Cf. Warren, *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XXII (1907), 137.

⁴ Schmeller, *Carmina Burana*, 155 ff.

⁵ Méon, *Nouveau Recueil*, I, 353-63.

⁶ Barbazan-Méon, IV, 354-65.

⁷ Meyer, *Romania*, XXXVII, 236-44.

⁸ Meyer, *op. cit.*, 221 ff.

⁹ Cf. Langlois, *op. cit.*, 17.

La penne estoit faite dou tans noviel,
Et li colers d'un haut cri d'un oysiel,
Et d'acoler deseure li tasiel,
De dous baisiers la fiche et li noiel (str. 59, 60).

b) The description of the palace of the God:

De rotruenges estoit tos fais li pons,
Toutes les planches de dis et de canchons,
De sons de harpes les estaces del fons,
Et les salies de dous lais de Bretons (70-73, 83-89).

c) The placing as door-keeper of the castle the bird *Phoenix*, who puts a riddle to the lover to prove the truth of his devotion before allowing him to enter (74 ff.).¹

d) The description of the chamber of the God of Love, with his bow and arrows (106-9).

The particular form of allegorical description which makes clothing and building material of songs and sighs and kisses is not uncommon, but belongs rather to the later developments of love allegory than to its early stages. In a lyric from a thirteenth-century manuscript we find a similar description of the God of Love:

Ses chevaus fu de deporz,
sa sele de ses dangiers,
ses escuz fu de cartiers,
de besier et de sozrire,
ses hauberz estoit
d'acoler estroit,
ses hiaumes de flors
de pluseurs colors.
sa lance est de cortoisie,
espee de flor de glai,
ses chaues de mignotie,
esperons de bec de jai.²

Again the mantle in *Florance et Blancheflor* is in the same style:

Li estains fu de flors de glai,
Traime i ot de roses en mai;
Les lisieres furent de flors,

¹ Cf. *Florance et Blancheflor*:

Ja ne sera vilain si os
Qu'il past le postiz de la porte,
Se le seel d'amors n'i porte (202-4).

² Bartsch, *Romanzen u. Pastourellen*, 26; cf. also 23.

Et les pannes furent d'amors.
 Ouvré furent bien li tasiel,
 Atachiés sont a chant d'oiseil (45-50).¹

The most striking instance of this sort of allegory is found in the Provençal *Chastel d'Amors*,² composed, according to Thomas, about the middle of the thirteenth century, probably in Italy. It is the result, in his opinion, of the inspiration of such poems as the *A leis cui am de cor e de saber*³ of Guiraut de Calanço and the *Cour d'Amour*.⁴ In the *Chastel d'Amors* the entire castle is built of abstract qualities, *las portas son de parlar . . . las claus son de preiar*, etc., but, except for this general similarity, there is no connection to be established with the *Fablel*.

The same is true with regard to the arrows of the God. We find mention of them in the *Nouvelle allégorique* of Peire Guillem,⁵ where, in addition to the God's dress of flowers, his bow with three arrows, one of gold, one of steel, and one of lead, is described. Here, as in the chanson of Guiraut de Calanço, a steel arrow is added to those of gold and lead. Any attempt, however, to trace source or influence through the description of the chamber and the arrows fails. We are thus led to the conclusion that the *Fablel dou dieu d'Amors* is, in all its essential traits, only one example of a sort of allegory which was widespread about the middle of the thirteenth century; from its contents alone that would be the date which we should naturally assign to it.

The introduction of the Phoenix as the door-keeper of the castle of Love brings us once more to Provençal and raises an interesting question. This mention of the Phoenix as giving a riddle is, as far as I have been able to discover, unique, with the exception of the lines in the sirventes *Fadet joglar* of Guiraut de Calanço:

e del Fenics
 com fera l[s] rics,
 si-l divinalh fes adimplir (vss. 226-228, ed. Keller).

We have here evidently a partial confusion of the Phoenix and the

¹ Cf. also *Hueline et Eglantine*, 295 ff.

² Ed. Thomas, *Annales du midi* (1889), 183-96 (fragment in Bartsch, *Provenzalische Chrestomathie*, coll. 299 ff.).

³ Bartsch, *op. cit.*, col. 183.

⁴ Constans, *Les manuscrits provençaux de Cheltenham*, 66 ff.

⁵ Bartsch, *op. cit.*, 291 ff. (middle of the thirteenth century).

Sphinx. That two writers should independently make this same confusion seems hardly likely. Moreover the passage in the *Fadet joglar*, written about 1200, cannot refer to the *Fabel*. The latter is clearly only a compilation and, as Gröber says, probably by a jongleur; the expression *Donne me a boire* and the discussion by the birds of the *vilain* versus the *chevalier* and the *clerc*, terminating in a manner favorable to the *vilain*, makes this more than probable. It is also improbable that the jongleur-author used Latin sources. There evidently existed a poem or poems in French or Provençal which both Guiraut and the author of the *Fabel* knew. We should expect the early development of love allegory in Provençal; Keller, in his edition of the *Fadet joglar*,¹ argues in favor of the existence of such poetry in Provençal in the latter half of the twelfth century. It is possible that the author of the *Fabel* drew his material from Provençal and not from French sources.

The importance of the *Fabel* in the history of allegory depends upon the date assigned to it and its possible influence on later poetry. If it belongs to the end of the twelfth or early thirteenth century and was a source of the *Roman de la Rose*, it not only formed the basis of *Venus la deesse d'amour*, but is also an integral part of the most important allegorical tradition of the middle ages. If it is later in date and did not influence Guillaume de Lorris, it is only an offshoot of an already highly developed allegory and produced nothing more important than the *Venus*.

E. Langlois considers it beyond question that Guillaume de Lorris took the framework of his part of the *Roman de la Rose* from the *Fabel*. A careful comparison of the two poems leaves me unconvinced of such a borrowing. The resemblances reduce themselves to a dream, a May morning, a garden, and a meeting with the God of Love. Langlois himself says, speaking of the *Clef d'Amour*: "Mais le songe était, comme je l'ai dit plus haut, d'un usage trop fréquent pour qu'on puisse tirer aucune conclusion de cette coïncidence. C'est aussi dans une vision qui ressemble fort à un songe que le dieu d'Amour dicte ses préceptes dans le livre d'André le Chapelain."² Given Guillaume de Lorris' plan of writing a dream of love and the May morning, the garden and the stream of water

¹ Pp. 25, 26.

² *Op. cit.*, 78, 79.

were necessities; for one who was familiar, as he must have been, with the lyric poetry of the day, they required no direct borrowing for their conventional description. The only proof which could have any sure weight in establishing a connection between the poems would be a similarity in isolated passages which could be explained only by borrowing or imitation. Langlois thinks he has proved such similarity, but the "coïncidence aussi exacte" which he finds does not stand the test of careful examination. The passages which he cites are but commonplaces of such description. To take two examples:

Quant jou oï des oisyllons le crit,
D'autre canchon en che liu ne de dit
N'eüsse cure, che saciés tout de fit (str. 20).

The counterpart of this Langlois finds in:

De voir sachiez quant les oï
Moult durement m'en esjoï,
Que mes si douce melodie
Ne fu d'omme mortel oïe (*Rose*, vss. 669-72).

And, further, Guillaume de Lorris must have known:

Fuelles et flors ont tos tans li ramier . . .
Ja par yvier n'aront nul destorbier (str. 11).

in order to write:

Qu'il i avoit tous jours plenté
De flors, et yver et esté (*Rose*, vss. 1409-10).

But if we turn to *Floire et Blanchefleur*, we find,

Que tous tans cil arbre florissent,
Bien sont flori cil arbrisel.
Tous tans i chantent mil oisel,
La oïssiez tel melodie
Qu'unques si grant ne fu oïe (vss. 619-23).

One need but turn to other narrative poetry of the time or to Bartsch's *Romanzen und Pastourellen* to find many such tags of description. The poets were simply drawing on the common stock, and the impossibility of using such lines as proof of borrowing is evident. Furthermore, of that which is most distinctive in the garden of the *Roman de la Rose*, the portraits on the walls, there is not a hint in the *Fablel*; of that which is most distinctive of the castle of Love and its approaches in the *Fablel*, the bridge of "chansons" and "lais de

Bretons," etc., there is not a hint in the *Roman de la Rose*. A detailed comparison of the two poems, for which I have no space here, will show that the differences in spirit and matter far exceed the resemblances, which, as stated above, consist simply of the dream, the May morning, the garden, and the presence of the God of Love. It seems to me, therefore, more than probable that Guillaume de Lorris knew nothing of the *Fablel*. It is possible that he could not have known it. If he wrote, as seems probable, between 1229 (1232) and 1236,¹ the *Fablel*, if known to him, would have to be dated about 1225. There is nothing in the language of the poem to require so early a date. In favor of a later date would be the strophe chosen, the fact that the poem seems to be a combination and working over of other poems and not an original work, and especially the type of allegory which builds the castle of the God of Love of lovers' sighs and prayers, etc. While there is nothing in the poem to enable us to fix the date with certainty, there is also nothing to require a date before the middle of the thirteenth century, and with the failure to prove that it was a source of the *Roman de la Rose* it loses much of its importance in the history of allegory.

"LE FABLEL DOU DIEU D'AMORS"

1. Qui d'amors velt selonc son sens user,
Au commenchie se doit si bien garder.
Que sa raison² puist si biel definir
N'i meche chose qui riens fache a blamer.
2. Or entendés, franch chevalier, baron,
Dames, puceles, si oiés ma raison;
Conter vos voel le moie avision.
Ne sai a dire se chou est voirs u non.
3. Par un matin me gisoie en mon lit,
D'amors pensoie, n'avoie autre delit.
Qant el penser m'endormi .j. petit,
Songai .j. songe dont tos li cuers me rist.
4. Je me levoie par .j. matin en may
Por la douchor des oysiaus et del glai,
Del loussignot, del malvis et dou gai.
Qant fui levés en .j. pre m'en entrai.

¹ Cf. Warren, *Publications Mod. Lang. Assn.*, XXIII (1908), 272.

² MS *raison*.

5. Je vos dirai com faite estoit la pree:¹
L'erbe i fu grande par desous la rousee;
Herbe ne flors n'i fust ja porparlee,
S'ele i fust quise, qu'ele n'i fust trovee.
6. De paradis i couroit uns rouissiax
Parmi la pree, qui tant ert clers² et biaux,
N'a tant viel home en cités n'en castiax,
S'il s'i baignast, lués ne fust jovenciax,³
7. Ne dame nule tant eüst mesjué,
Mais qant nul jor n'eüst enfant porté,
Se .j. petit eüst asavouré,
Ne fust pucele, ains qu'ele issist del pré.
8. La graviele ert de preceuses pieres.
Molt en i ot de diverses manieres,
U escrit erent oisiel et biestes fieres;
Ne sai a dire les queles sont plus cieres.
9. Parmi le pree m'alai esbanoiant,⁴
Les le riviere tout dalés .j. pendant;
Gardai amont deviers solel luisant:
.j. vergié vic, cele part vine errant.
10. De tel maniere estoit tous li vergiés,
Ains n'i ot arbre, ne fust pins u loriés,
Cyprîés, aubours, entes et oliviers.
Ce sont li arbre(s) que nous tenons plus ciers.
11. Fuelles et flors ont tos tans li ramier,
Et sont de roses bien carchié li rosier.
Ja por yvier n'aront nul destorbier;
Nient plus que may ne criement il fevrier.
12. De toutes pars les enclot uns fossés,
Qui jusque⁵ el fons fu de marbre pavés;
Par grant engien i estoit amenés
Uns bras de l'eve qui couroit par dalés.
13. Et li quariel dou mur et dou fossé
De porfil erent et d'yvoire quarré.
Ne savelon ne chauc n'i ot, ains destempré [522 r. a.]
A or furent fondut, si fort joint et sauté.⁶

¹ MS *pree*.³ MS. *jovenenciaz*.² MS. *clere*.⁴ MS *esbanoient*.⁵ MS *jusques*.⁶ 13.c.d. have 12 syllables. Perhaps:

Sablon ne chauc n'i ot, ains destempré
A or fondut si fort joint et sauté.

14. Devant le porte ert li pons levels,
Tous de fin or tresjetés et faitis;
Et les estaces erent toutes de marbre bis;¹
Che sont estaces ki dueront tous dis.
15. Ains ne fust eure se vilains i venist,
Et ce fust cose que ens entrer volsist,
Oustre son gre, qant sor le pont venist,
Levast li pons et li porte closist.
16. Tout ensi fust de soi k'il s'en ralast,
Car ne voloient que vilains i entrast;
Et ausi tost que il s'en retornast,
Ouvrist li porte et li pons ravalast.
17. Et s'uns cortois vausist laiens aler,
En cel vergié por son cors deporter,
Trovast la porte ouverte por entrer,
Que ja li pons n'eüst soing de lever.
18. Chius vregiés ert as vilains en defois,
Car c'ert celi ki d'amors estoit rois;
Et cascun(s) an, u .ii. fies u trois,
Il tient justice et remue ses loys.
19. Sans contredit m'en entrai la dedens;
Ne vos sai dire com il par estoit gens.
Des oyselés i ot plus de mil cens;
Cascuns cantoit d'amors selonc son sens.
20. Laiens entrai sans nesun contredit.
Qant jou oi des oysillons le crit,
D'autre canchon en che liu ne de dit
N'eüsse cure, che saciés tout de fit.
21. Sous ciel n'a home, s'il les oïst canter,
Tant fust vilains, ne l'estet[s]t amer.
Illuec m'asis por mon cors deporter
Desous une ente ki molt fait a loër.
22. Elle est en l'an .iiii. fois de tel nature:
Elle flourist, espanist et meüre;
De tous mehains garist qui li honeure,
Fors de la mort, vers cui riens n'asegure.
23. Qant desous l'ente el vergié fui assis,
Et jou oi des oysillons les cris,
De joie fu si mes cuers raëmplis,
Moi fu avis que fuisse em paradis.

¹ Twelve syllables. Omit *erent* or *toutes*.

24. Li loussignos crioit en son langage:
 "Cius buer¹ fu nes cui sa mie acorage,
 "Si est de lui com il est de le nage
 "Qui par bon vent tout lau ele velt nage."
25. Puis apiela, cantant en son latin,
 Tous les oysiaus ki a lui sont acilin;
 Et il i vinrent, ains n'i quisent chemin,
 N'i ot cheli ne li fesist enclin.
26. Qant devant lui les ot tous assanblés: [522 r. b]
 "Signor, dist il, enviers moi entendés.
 "Moi est avis c'amors est empirés,
 "N'est mie teus com estre doit d'assés."
27. Li espreviers parla premierement:
 "Sire, fait il, che font vilainne gent,
 "Cil qui mesdient d'amors a escient;
 "Se cortois fussent, nel fesissent noient.
28. "Loussignos, sire, bien fust drois et mesure
 "Que ja vilains d'amisté n'eüst cure;
 "Car se il aime en aucune mesure,
 "N'est pas por li, ains est par aventure.
29. "Ne se deüssent entremetre d'amer,
 "Se clerc ne fussent qui bien sevent parler
 "A leurs amies, acointier et juër,
 "U chevaliers ki por li va jouter."
30. "Sire espreviers, chou a dit li malvis,
 "Cho que vos dites n'est nient voirs, ce m'est vis,
 "Que ja nus hom d'amors n'ara delis
 "Se il n'est clers u chevaliers eslis."
31. "Chou, dist li gays, bien puet estre vretés,
 "Que s'uns hom aime et il est bien amés,
 "Preus est et sages comme clers escolés,
 "Et chevaliers d'amors est adoubés."
32. Li loussignos entendit le tenchon,
 Que par estrif faisoient li baron;
 Hauce se vois et dist en sa raison:
 "Ne dira nus chi apriés, se jou non."
33. Trestout se teurent, li loussignos parla:
 "Signour, dist il, cius ki bien amera
 "Ja de nului s'il puet [ne] mesdira,
 "Mais preus et sages et cortois estera.

¹ MS buet.

34. "Sous' ciel n'a home, s'il se painne d'amer,
"Cortois ne soit ains qu'il s'en puist torner.
"Por chou vos pri, cel plait laissiés ester;
"Por poi de cose puet bien grans mals monter.
35. "Je le vos di, les grans et les petis,
"Departés vos, si requerés vos nis.
"A vos femeies demenés vos delis;
"Car je cuic bien ke passés est miedis."
36. A hiest mot se departirent tuit.
Cascuns oysiaus ala en son deduit,
Et jou remés trestous seus sans deduit
Desous cele ente, u il ot fuelle et fruit.
37. Chou qu'orent dit li oysiel recordai,
Tout en dormant, c'onques ne m'esvellai.
Apriés che songe autre songe songai:
Donne me a boire, je le vos conterai.
38. Je me seioie trestous seus sous cele ente;
Ki seus se siet volentiers se dement.
Tout le vregié gardai, les une sente [522 v. a]
Si vic venir une pucele gente.
39. Elle fu loing, si nel reconnue mie,
Et qant fu pres, connue que fu ma mie.
"Hai! Diex! di je, dame Sainte Marie!
"Ne voi jou chi et ma mort et ma vie?"
40. Elle ot vestu .j. peliçon hermin,
Et par deseure .j. bliaut d'orgasin,
En son doit ot .j. anelet d'or fin;
Qant moi connut, si tint le chief enclin.
41. Ha icele eure fui molt joians et liés;
Ne fui pas lens, mais tost sali en piés:
"Ma douche amie, di jou, a bien vigniés!"
"Sire, dist elle, et vos a bien soiés!"
42. Entre mes bras l'acolai boinement,
Et ele moi, par les flans ensemment.
Vers moi l'estrais, baisai le doucement
Plus de .c. fois par le mien escient.
43. Elle parla comme pucele honeste:
"Sire, chi n'a home, feme ne beste;
"Por Diu vos pri, le gloriex celestre,
"Ne faites cose ki moi vigne a moleste."

¹ MS *Cous.*

44. "Non ferai jou, ma bieie douce amie;
 "Mais or me dites, se Diex vos beneite,
 "Comment venistes ichi sans compagnie?"
 "Comment g'i vint? Volés que le vos die?"
45. "Dites le moi."—"Jou i vint par souhait."
 "Mervelles oi."¹—"Chou est voirs entresait:
 Si com je croi, ne vos vient pas a lait."
 "Non, en ma foi, ains avés molt bien fait."
46. "De vos amer, sui jou tos tans entaite;
 "Juners, pensers et veliers me debaite.
 "Li vostre amors m'a a la mort atraite;
 "Ne puis savoir comment pais en soit faite."
47. "Molt faic que fole, ki men penser vos di;
 "Bien le doi faire que vous tienc a ami.
 "Ja, se je puis, au penser c'or ai chi,
 "Autrui que vos n'averai a mari."
48. Adont fina la bieie son complaint.
 "Biele, fis jou, votre amors mi destraint;
 "Chius qui a mal ne puet nient s'il ne² plaint,
 "Dont set on bien que de rien ne se faint."
49. "A vous me plaing, bieie, de ma dolor.
 "Pas ne me faine,³ bien pert a ma color.
 "A vos pens jou et le nuit et le jour;
 "Sovent en ai grant joie et grant tristor."
50. "Et dolans sui et plains de grant air;
 "Qant a vos pense, je ne vos puis veïr,
 "Et qant vos puis acoler et sentir,
 "Dont sui jou liés, ne vos en quier mentir."
51. Qant vers li oc⁴ definé mon corage, [522 v. b]
 Atant es vos .j. grant serpent volage.
 Iiii. piés ot comme bieste sauvage;
 Par [le] vregié vint demenant grant rage.
52. Vint acourant, si a prise ma mie
 En coste moi et si l'en a ravie.
 "Mes dous amis!" a haute vois s'escrie,
 "Secourés moi que n'i perde la vie!"
53. Qant jou ot que secours requeroit,
 Et que par moi nule ale n'aroit,
 Car g'iere a pié et li serpens voloit,
 Molt fui dolans qant ma mors demoroit.

¹ MS ot.² MS se.³ MS faic.⁴ MS ot.

54. "Ahi serpent! di jou, bieste tant fiere!
"Por coi emportes le riens que j'ai tant ciere?"
De duel et d'ire esroidi comme pierre,
Et devine vers plus que n'est fuele d'iere.
55. Ne poc mot¹ dire; de duel caï pasmés.
Apriés grant pieche, qant je fui relevés,
Tains fui et pales, torbles, descoulorés.
"He tiere! ouvrés! fis jou, si m'engloutés!
56. "Las moi chaitis, que n'ai ichi m'espee,
"Par coi ma vie peüst² estre finee!
"Ja de men sanc fust tote ensanglantee,
"Car a cest cop fust ma mors terminee.
57. "Ha, Diex d'amors, com est fols qui te sert!
"Car qant ce vient en la fin, si te pert,
"Se jou ma mie ne rai par mon desert.
"A tous jours mais te tenrai por cuivert."
58. Ceste parole ne mist pas en oubli
Li Diex d'amors, cui jou ai tant servi;
Car ne seuc mot qant jou venir le vi,
Sor .j. cheval apresté et garni.
59. Tous ses chevaus estoit couvers de flors;
Molt en i ot de diverses coulors.
De son mantiel ert li traime d'amors,
Et li estains estoit de may vers jours.
60. La penne estoit faite dou tans noviel,
Et li colers d'un haut cri d'un oysiel.
Et d'acoler deseure li tasiel,
De dous baisiers la fiche et li noiel.
61. "Amis, dist il, li Diex d'amors te saut!
"Di moi, c'as tu? Quele chose te faut?
"Et por coi mainnes si grant duel en cel gaut?
"Li dex que mainnes nule riens ne te vaut."
62. "Je vos ai dit por coi j'ai tant dolors.
"Mais or me dites, qui avés tant de flors,
"Ques hom vos iestes?"—"Je sui li Diex d'amors;
"A vostre amie venoie por secors."
63. "Ja est a tart."—"Toi k'encaut, n'ara mal.
"Ensanble od moi venras tot cele val,
"Deriere moi monte sor mon cheval, [523 s. a]
"En camp florri, au castiel principal."³

¹ MS *moc.*

² MS *puist.*

³ *c, d, are possibly interverted in the MS.*

64. Qant ses paroles et ses dis entendi,
Le cheval torne, derriere lui sali.
Ensanble od lui m'en vinc en camp flori,
Devant le porte au perron descendi.
65. Devant le porte descendi au perron,
Et il descent devant sor son archon.
"Amis, dist il, entendés ma raison:
"Veschi me cort, me sale et me maison!
66. "Laiens irés por deporter¹ vo cors,
"Et jou irai en cel vregié la fors.
"Se votre amie ne secourc, cho est tors;
"Secors ara, car poisans sui et fors.
67. "Je ne ai k'ester; cis jors va a declin."
"Che fait mon, sire, metés vos au chemin."
Le cheval hurte des esperons d'or fin;
Et je remés sor le piler marbrin.
68. Ains k'ens entrasse, regardai le palais.
Ains tex ne fu ne n'iert, je cuic, jamais;
Et s'un petit me faisiiés de pais,
Je vos diroie comment il estoit fais.
69. Premiers vos voel aconter de l'entree,
Par quel maniere elle fut devisee,
Et des fossés ki l'ont avironnee,
Et puis dou mur dont ele estoit fermee.
70. De rotruēges estoit tos fais li pons,
Toutes les plankes de dis et de canchons,
De sons de harpes les estaces del fons,
Et les saliies de dous lais de bretons.
71. Li fossés ert de souspirs en plaignant;
El fons desous ot une aige courant:
Toute est de larmes que pleurent li amant
Quant se racordent doucement en baisant.
72. Li doi estiel de le porte et li baus,
Ne cuidiés mie che fust caisnes ne fax;
Ains estoit faite des dolors et des max
Que li amant sueffrent, et des travaux.
73. Et li grans huis, li flaiaus et li siere
De proiere ert, de douçor de sens querre,
Por coi on puist del tout l'amor conquerre.
Qui chou ne fait, ne puet amer sans guerre.

¹ MS *deport'er*.

74. De cele porte ert .j. oysiax gardere,
Qui si nasqui qu'il n'ot pere ne mere.
Quant il est viex, en .j. fu se repere,
Par soi meisme se renaist et rapere.
75. *Fenis* a non, si com la lettre dist;
Ja ne faura se li mons ne fenist.
Quant il est viex, en .j. fu se brüst,
Par soi meismes se renaist et nourist.
76. Et chis oysiax ki portiers en estoit, [523 r. b]
Chou senefie amour en bone foit.
Qui son corage a nului ne diroit,
Par soi meisme se racorde et fait droit.
77. Vinc a le porte, je vauc laiens entrer;
Elle estoit close, boutai por deffremer.
Elle estoit ferme, n'i voc longhes ester;
Hoçai l'aniel ki fu fais de penser.
78. Quant li portiers ot hocier l'aniel,
Tres bien connut que c'estoit sons d'apiel.
Vint a le porte et dist que moi fust biel.
"Volés entrer, amis, en cest castiel?"
79. "Entrer i voel, se vos le commendés."
"Bien le commanch, se vos adevinés
"Qui chou puet estre ki sans mere fu nés.
"Se vos le dites, bien sai que vos amés."
80. "T'i ruis entrer. Se jou de riens i fal,
"Que ne le die a petit de travail,
"Et se nel di, dites que petit vail.
"De toi meisme en fait la devinal.
81. "Bien te connois, car *Fenis* as a non;
"Pere ne mere n'eüs ains, se toi non.
"De te naissanche ne ferai lonc sermon.
"Oevre le porte, n'i quier nule ocoison."
82. "Certes, dist il, ocoison n'i querrai.
"Vous avés dit chou que vos demandai.
"Sages hom estes; des or vos servirai.
"Entrés chaiens; u palais vos lairai."
83. Ouvri le porte et j'entrai la dedans.
Vinc ou palais ki fu fais par grans sens.
Se l'esienche avoie de totes gens,
Ne sai a dire com il par estoit gens.

84. Mais selonc chou que il¹ m'estoit avis,
 Vos voel conter com ert fais et furnis,
 Et de ques coses il estoit establis.
 Li .xij. mois i furent tout assis.
85. Genviers, fevriés, mars et avrius et mais,
 Et tout li autre ke nomeroie hui mais.
 Cil sostenoient par force le palais;
 Sor teus pilers estoit assis et fais.
86. A destre part erent li mois d'esté,
 De plusors flors vesti et conréé.
 Ki les veïst, se n'eüst ja amé,
 Ja ne fausist qu'il n'amast de son gré.
87. Et a seniestre avoient lor devise
 Li mois d'ivier et froidure et bisse.
 N'est nule cose, tant soit de caut esprise,
 Froide ne soit, se vers iaus est assise.
88. De ce palais, dont vos m'oés conter,
 Li .xij. mois en estoient pyler.
 Les pavés furent de douchement amer, [523 v. a]
 Et de servir li banc et li² donner.
89. Li lateüre et tout li kiviron
 D'umilité et de douce raison;
 Li couverture d'amors faite a larron,
 Que nus ne set, se chius u cele non.
90. De c'estoit faite dire ne vos poroie.
 Chou que je di ne cuic que nus m'en croie;
 Si puet bien estre k'en songe le veoie.
 Vinc en la sale, u molt avoit de joie.
91. Laiens trovai tante gentil maisnie,
 De damoysiaus; cascuns avoit sa mie;
 Cascuns juoit illuec de legerie;
 D'esquiés, de table[s] estoit li hahatie.
92. Chascuns dansiaus a sa mie juoit
 D'esquiés, de tables. Ki son par sormontoit
 Autre loier n'autre argent n'en avoit,
 Fors seulement .j. baisier emprendoit.
93. Qant vinc laiens et je fui recheüs,
 Molt fui amés de tous et chier tenus.

¹ MS *qu il*.

² *Cor. de.* Donner as a noun in a sense that would suit here is unknown to me. The copyist probably carried the article of the preceding word over to *donner*.

- N'i ot celui ne me donast salus;
Trestout disent: "A bien soiés venus!"¹
94. Por moi amor laisserent le juër,
Ensamble od moi vinrent por deporter,
De coste moi le plus prochain piler
Nous asesimes por deduit demener.
95. Je leur contai trestout mon errement:
Comment ma mie perdi par le serpent,
Et le secours ke me fist ensemment
Li Diex d'amors, a cui grant joie apent.
96. Li² respondirent: "Ja mar en duterés.
"Sachiés de fi, aparmain le rarés.
"Ne soiés tristes; coi que soit, nous cantés.
"Chou est nos fiés; tel rente nous devés."
97. "Signor, fis jou, chi a molt biele rente.
"Il est molt fels, ciels qui trop se demente.
"Je canterai; canters ne m'atелente,
"Car por ma mie m'est il auques a ente."
98. "Il a bien dit," fisent tout li baron.
Dames, pucieles, tout cil de le maison,
Se teurent tuit por oïr me canchon,
Et je lor dis, oïés de quel raison:—
99. "El mois de mai qant la rose est florie,
"Chantent oysiel; l'ore est douce et serie.
"N'i a dansiel ki tant ait bone vie
"Ne li soit biel s'il a loial amie.
100. "Por moi le di; jou ainc une puciele,
"Ains de mes iex certes ne vi plus biele.
"Pas ne n'oubli, ains m'est[os] jors noviele
"Et m'a saisi le cuer sor la mamiele.
101. "Et sachiés bien que par ses grans douçors, [523 v. b]
"Sor toutes riens je l'amerai tos jors.
"Certes engiens m'a pris de grant dolors
"Se par³ le sien ne me tient a amors.
102. "Mais or li pri, la biele creature,
"Par son otroi qu'ele de moi ait cure.
"Si com je croi, s'ele est auques si dure
"Encontre moi, cho est grans meffaiture.

¹ A syllable short. Perhaps *Trestout* me disent.

² Cor. *Si*.

³ Cor. *por*.

103. "La rotruenge ch'ai faite s'en ira
 "Et sans losenge a ma mie dira
 "Qu'ele me tienge, qant en sa prison m'a;
 "A li me tieng, ne sai se m'amera."
104. A hiest mot fu ma canchons finee.
 Molt fu de tous et prisie et loee:¹
 N'i ot celi, tant amast a celee,
 Ne li fesist souvent muër pensee.
105. Qant j'oc cho dit, illuec ne voc plus estre.
 Une pucele me prist par la main diestre.
 "Sire, dist ele, venés veoir nostre estre."
 En une cambre entrames a seniestre.
106. Icele cambre estoit li dius² d'amors.
 La ert ses lit, la estoit ses retors.³
 La vic .ij. keuvres ki pendoient a flors,
 Et par deseure pendoit li ars d'amors.
107. En l'un des keuvres, qui pendoit plus aval,
 Avoit saietes. Li fier sont de metal;
 De plonc estoient; qu'en est⁴ navrés par mal
 Ja n'amera en cest siecle mortal.
108. En l'autre keuvre, qui pendoit par engin,
 Avoit saietes. Li fier en sont d'or fin;
 De plonc estoient;⁵ au soir u au matin
 Chius fait amors a sa maniere acilin.
109. Li diex d'amors qant se va deporter,
 De ces saietes cui il en velt navrer,
 Contre ses dars ne se puet nus tenser.
 L'un fait hair et l'autre fait amer.
110. Hors de la cambre issimes main a main;
 Dehors la sale venimes au serain.
 Illuec trovames, et ne gaires lointain,
 .j. pre herbu estendu en .j. plain.
111. Enmi cel pre ot .j. arbre molt biel.
 De maintes guisses i cantoient oysiel;
 Au pié del arbre, par desous .j. tuiel,⁶
 Ot une tombe d'un gentil damoisiel.

¹MS loe. The copyist perhaps mistook *priste* for a masculine form, and so wrote *loe*.

²Cor. diu (?).

³MS retous.

⁴MS qn dest.

⁵This half-line seems to have been copied by mistake from 107c; cf. *Venus* 249,c:
 "Qui en ert navrés al soir et al matin."

⁶Tuiel seems to be used here in the sense of "branch"; cf. *Chanson des Saxons*, 38, 39:
 Cl naist de la chanson et racine et tulax
 Dont li chans et li dis est mirables et blax.

112. Oysiaus i ot. Por l'ame del signor
Qui la gisoit cantent de vrai amor.
Qant il ont fain cascuns baise une flor;
Ja puis n'aront ne fain ne soif le jor.
113. "Gentis pucele, fis jou, et c'or me dis,
"Icis dansiaus ki chi est enfouis,
"Ques hom fu il a cel te[n]s qu'il fu vist?" [524 r. a]
"Sire, dist ele, che fu ja mes amis.
114. "Gentius hom fu, et si fu fils au roi;
"Por ma biauté m'ama, si com jou croi."
"Comment fu mors?" "Il fu ocis por moi."
"Por vos? Comment? Qui che fist et por coi?"
115. Elle me conte simplement en plorant¹
De son ami qu'ele ama bonement.
"Sire, dist elle, jou l'amai voirement;
"Souventes fois me dissent mi parent:
116. "Folle meschine, lai ester ton amer.
"Ne te prendra(i) a moillier ne a per.
"En cest pais vint² por a[r]mes porter;
"Qant li plaira, si s'en volra raler.'
117. "Tant l'amai miex que plus en fui cosee.
"Il me manda coiemment a celee
"S'ensamble od lui aloie en sa contree,
"De moi feroit roïne couronee.
118. "Et³ jou li dis, quant jou a li parlai:
"Sire, fis jou, por t'amour le ferai.
"Metons .j. jor que je vos nommerai:
"Nous moverons le premier jor de mai."
119. "Et cis lons termes nous torna a anui.
"Movons, dist il, le matin ambedui!
"Le matinee me meuc ensamble od lui;
"En no compaignie n'efins cure d'autrui.
120. "Tout .j. vergié aliens les .j. val,
"Si encontrames .j. orgillous vassal.
"Amis, dist il, donés cha cel cheval,
"Cele pucele n'en pues mener sans mal.
121. "Moi laisseras et li et le destrier,
"Et se par armes ne le vels desraisnier,
"A men espee te quier le cief trenchier.'
"Sire, fist il, trop poés manechier.

¹ Cor. en plorant simplement.

² MS vinc.

³ MS ot.

122. "Vilonie est d'omme qui tant manache;
 "Ja por vos seul ne widerai la place.
 "S'il est qui fuit, il trueve qui le cache.'
 "L'espriel alonge, le fort escu enbrache.
123. "Qant la bataille vic por moi commenchier,
 "Le mien ami armai d'on seul baisier.
 "Puis m'alai sir les l'ombre d'un lorier;
 "Le mien cheval laissai tout estraier,
124. "Le diu d'amors priai molt douchement:
 "Sire, dis jou, por ten commendement
 "S'onkes fis cose ki te fust a talent,
 "Le mien ami gardés hui de torment.'
125. "Ha icest mot se sont entreferu.
 "Plainnes les lanches se sont entrebatu;
 "Sus resalirent com home de vertu;
 "N'i ot celi ki nul mal ait eü.
126. "Des brans d'achier commence[nt] a ferir; [524 r. b]
 "Desarmé furent ains por bien escremir.
 "Ne pot l'uns l'autre de noient escarnir,
 "Que ambedeus nes esteüst morir.
127. "Qant mon ami vic jesir ou sablon,
 "Navré et mort por itele ocoison,
 "Plus de .c. fois trestout en .j. rendon
 "Li ai baisié li faiche et le menton.
128. "Ha! fis jou, me joie et mes depors!
 "Par quel folie, dous amis, estes mors?
 "Se jou pors vos ne m'ocis chou est tors.'
 "Plus de .c. fois me pasmai sor le cors.
129. "Apriés grant pieche, quant vinc de pasmison,
 "Si vic venir .j. nobile baron,
 "Le diu d'amors devant sen compaignon;
 "A chevauchant vinrent tout le sablon.
130. "Li diex d'amors parla premierement:
 "Biele, fist il, que plourés si griément?
 "Se vos amis est mors par hardement,
 "En ma compaignie emprendrés .j. de .c.'
131. "Sire, fis jou, jamais n'arai ami,
 "Mais ces .ij. cors faites porter de chi.'
 "Molt volentiers; et vos, montés aussi,
 "Q'ensamble od moi venrés en camp flori.'

132. "Ha icest mot montai sor mon destrier,
 "Et les .ij. cors prisent li chevalier;
 "En camp flori venins au herbregier,
 "Le nuit villames as .ij. cors por waitier.
133. "Le matinee les a fait entierer
 "Molt richement por lire et por canter.
 "La gist li uns, bien [fait]¹ amonester,
 "Et chi li autres que je tant poc amer.
134. "Et encore prient cil oysiel en lor loi
 "Que diex en ait merchi par son saintisme otroi.²
 "Or vos ai dit, dous amis, par me foi,
 "Comment fu mors, ki cho fist, et por coi.
135. "Or en alommes lassus esbanoiant
 "En cele sale u il a joie grant.
 "Qant je vienc chi ja n'arai joie tant,
 "Por mon ami n'aie le cuer dolant."
136. Qant la pucele m'ot tout ensi conté,
 Nous repairaines main a main par le pré;
 Devant la sale venimes au degré.
 Ains k'en la sale fusiens laiens entré,
137. Tout le vregié gardai les une val.
 Si vic venir .j. nobile vassal,
 Le diu d'amors. Devant sor sen cheval
 Tenoit ma mie, si n'avoit point de mal.
138. Molt fui joians qant je venir le vi,
 Car ne cuidai nul jor vivre sans li.
 Couruc encontre et si le descendi. [524 v. a]
 "Sire, dis jou, la tiue grant merchi;
139. "Qant ma mie as garandie de mort
 "Et rendu m'as me joie et me deport."
 — "Amis, dist il, jou eüsse grant tort
 "Se ne t'aidaisse qant tu crois en mon sort.
140. "Tu m'as servi et fais les miens commans.
 "Anchois assés que t'eüsses .vij. ans."
 — "Bien le doi faire, car vos estes poissans,
 "De vos servir ne serai recreans."

¹ Cf. *Venus*, 271c.

² Twelve syllables. Omits *saintisme*, inserted as part of a formula.

141. Qant del cheval ot mise jus ma mie,
Et je senti que de mort fu garie,
Onques encore a nul jor de ma vie
N'oc si grant joie com j'oc a cele fie.
142. Por le grant joie que jou oc m'esperì,
Si m'esvillai qant j'oc assés dormi.
Molt fui dolans que songes me menti.
Coi que ce soit, a bien soit averti.

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THE SINCERITY OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

The nineteenth century came to its close with one notable critical achievement: the final discrediting of all existing biographical interpretations of the Shakespearean sonnets. This fact was made plain by the interesting literary joust in 1898 between Mr. William Archer and Mr. Sidney Lee, champions for Pembroke and Southampton, respectively—a joust in which each warrior successfully unhorsed his opponent. When Mr. Lee had once shown that the “Mr. W. H.” of the Shakespearean dedication by Thorpe could not possibly have been intended as a designation for “the Right Honourable, William Earle of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlaine to His Majestie, one of his most honorable Privie Counsell, and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter,” the title under which the same publisher elsewhere addressed the noble Lord, and when there was added a disproof of the supposed punning upon “Will” as the name of Shakespeare’s rival, the strongest arguments for the earl of Pembroke were seen to have melted like the mist. On the other hand, the Southampton theory, with its preposterous assertion that we should see in the effeminate youth of the sonnets one of the most manly and ambitious soldiers of the court, and that Shakespeare actually wrote sonnets to this soldier for three years without the slightest reference to his contemporary warlike career, was surely left in little better case. Along with Pembroke and Southampton, the supposed originals of the other characters in the sonnets disappeared one by one. Mary Fytton, at first so attractive a candidate for the Dark Ladyship, disappeared as soon as authentic portraits showed her to have been a pronounced blonde. The heroine of “Willobie his Avis,” warmly indorsed by Mr. Fleay for this position and half-heartedly supported by Mr. Lee, proved equally disappointing, since all her characteristics and her situation were seen to differ entirely from those of Shakespeare’s lady. And the Rival Poet with the “proud, full sail of his great verse,” who figured so prominently in Shakespearean discussions of the eighties, whom Professor Minto ingeniously discovered

87]

to be Chapman from subtle allusions which Chapman himself would hardly have detected, and whom other critics had variously identified with Barnes, Daniel, Davies, Drayton, Jonson, Markham, Marlowe, Nash, Spenser, and Watson, this Rival Poet cannot now be said with certainty to have belonged even to this fairly inclusive list of all the prominent poets of the period. There is at the present time absolutely no satisfactory identification of a single one of the characters mentioned in the sonnets. Friend or patron, rival poet, mistress, all are alike unknown to us. Eternized they are indeed in the sonnets, but not elsewhere. Their traces on the sands of Elizabethan scandal, if they were once visible, have long since disappeared. Sober history knows neither their deeds nor their names.

The question then has naturally arisen, What right have we to affirm even their bare existence? May not the beautiful and beloved youth, the towering rival poet, the sinful mistress, be but additional imaginative creations of that dramatic genius whose power to create them none can deny, and may not this creation have been merely an instance of conformity to a passing fashion, and a passing fashion hopelessly conventional and artificial, so that from Shakespeare's poems we can hope to gain no additional knowledge of the poet's soul, but merely fresh examples of his metrical technique?

The answer to either question involves an appeal from the sonnets of William Shakespeare to the other sonnets of his time. The enforcement of this appeal has been the great and meritorious contribution of Mr. Sidney Lee, a contribution that may ultimately outvalue in productiveness almost every other that has been made since the sonnet discussion first began. Mr. Lee, after starting as one of the school of biographical interpreters, succeeded, in spite of his lingering fondness for the Southampton theory, in working his way through to a far more fruitful position. Fruitful as the position is, however, it seems to the present writer to have been carried much too far. It asserts not only the broad thesis that Shakespeare's sonnets must be considered in relation to the general Renaissance type of sonnet in Italy, France, and England—and with this thesis we must now all agree—but it also makes the more specific contentions that this type was one of conventional compliment,

artificial and insincere, and that Shakespeare's sonnets belong in essentials to this conventional and artificial type. Both contentions are very succinctly put by Mr. Lee in his *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 159: "Genuine emotion or the writer's personal experience very rarely inspired the Elizabethan sonnet, and Shakespeare's sonnets proved no exception to the rule." This specific theory, because of its simplicity and its adaptation to the impersonal tendencies of recent scholarship, has gained wide acceptance.

Nevertheless, although Mr. Lee's theory is admirably simple, in his search for simplicity he has neglected certain distinctions that are fundamental to an accurate understanding of the subject. Foremost of these is the distinction between literal and imaginative sincerity. The question of literal sincerity is a biographical one, and is naturally emphasized by biographical critics. When a poet undertakes to express emotions relating to certain characters and to certain events, is he referring to real characters and to actual events? If so, then he is literally sincere. This is the only kind of sincerity that Mr. Lee's school tends to recognize, but it is really far less important than the other type. Imaginative sincerity demands simply that a poet in recounting any situation, real or fictitious, shall not pretend to more emotion or to another kind of emotion than that which he actually feels. The value of these two kinds should be sharply discriminated. The criterion of imaginative sincerity is an essential and primary aesthetic principle, and must be applied in every thoroughgoing criticism of poetry; it offers one of the most important standards of poetic evaluation. The criterion of literal sincerity has properly in itself nothing whatever to do with poetic evaluation; it is concerned solely with the *cause* of any given poem, not with the nature of the poem itself. Either type may exist without the other. For instance, a man may be deeply in love, and yet if he does not chance to be a poet, his expressions of that love will probably be high-flown, exaggerated, and altogether lacking in imaginative sincerity. On the other hand, a real poet may feel intense, noble, and lofty emotion over an imagined situation, as is proved by the very existence of the poetic drama. In the quotation from Mr. Lee given above, both kinds of sincerity are combined without discrimination, in one phrase, and both are

denied to the Renaissance sonnetteers in general and to Shakespeare in particular.

Such a conclusion seems to me unjustifiable. I believe that the literal sincerity of the mass of Renaissance sonneteers, including William Shakespeare, has been denied far too hastily, and that where there is not explicit evidence to the contrary their sonnets should still for the most part be interpreted as probably expressive of "personal experience." Most of these sonnets are highly artificial, to be sure, but this artificiality affects the genuineness of the expression, not necessarily the genuineness of the emotion behind it. Shakespeare's sonnets, however, far from belonging as a whole to the conventional artificial type, are in essential spirit thoroughly opposed to it, and possess that higher imaginative sincerity which proves in itself the existence of "genuine emotion." These contentions manifestly join issue squarely with the position of Mr. Lee. In order to establish them I must be permitted first to run over the chief characteristics of the Renaissance sonnet in the course of its development from Petrarch to Shakespeare, and then to consider the special individualizing elements in the work of the latter.

It is sufficient to begin with Petrarch, since it was he who definitely fixed the distinguishing features of the sonnet *genre* both in style and content as it was later to spread over the whole of western Europe. This is not to deny that the main characteristic of Petrarchan love, that of hopeless devotion to a scornful lady, the lover's superior morally or socially, had existed earlier in the school of Dante, at the court of Frederick II, and in the Provençal poetry of the Troubadours, or that it may have originated in the social conditions of feudalism, wherein the lonely young chatelaine, married to a much older seigneur engrossed in his wars and ambitions, found it natural and necessary to eke out her soul's longing with the devotion of youthful *beaux chevaliers* of the castle. But it was Petrarch who gave the stamp of his own genius to the special form which this love was to take in the poetry of the Renaissance, and although many of the sonneteers were more familiar with Petrarchan imitation than with the original, nevertheless all looked back to the Tuscan as their real master.

The central motif of these poems is of course the hopeless love of

the author for a certain Laura, usually, though by no means definitively, identified with Laura de Noves, wife of Hugh de Sade of Avignon. Whether this identification be correct or no, and whether, as has been argued by M. Henri Hauvette, Petrarch's Laura was unmarried at the time he first saw her, or whether the more traditional view is right that she was even then married, certain it is that throughout the greater part of the *Rime* she appears as the chaste and loyal wife of another. The poet's love is for an unattainable object, and therefore finds its activity in whelming the poet's soul with sadness. The great characteristic of Petrarch's amorousness is its despair; the great characteristic of the despair is its amorousness. Suffering or sorrow from other causes than love is in the *Rime* of Petrarch almost non-existent.

Thus the characteristic Petrarchan love unavoidably involves an element of lawless desire. There is nothing vulgar about it; the poet's hopes are usually harmless enough, contenting themselves with the longing to behold Laura's unveiled face or ungloved hand, or to receive other similarly innocent favors, but nevertheless he feels in his soul that his love is wrong, and every now and then rises and fights vainly in behalf of morality against it. In this psychological situation lie the germs of almost all the emotions expressed in the sonnet poetry of the next two centuries. The elements of sorrowful resignation, devotion, worship directed to an unattainable object, lend themselves readily to combination with moral aspiration or religious ecstasy or Platonic idealism, at the same time that the despair over the loss of earthly pleasure finds its utterance in what today we should call "the lyric cry," while on the other hand the intermittent moral disapproval of this same love offers opportunity for inner conflict and soul struggle of a dramatic character.

Hence the central situation is broad enough to include various fundamental kinds of human experience, and to give rise to various types of expression. Nevertheless, considered in reference to actual Renaissance or modern life, it remained ultimately a specialized and abnormal situation. From the beginning the lover's devotion is without serious thought of reward or change in his condition; actual return of his love is the very last thing he would expect, and any concrete imagination of mutual affection is a thing almost unknown.

The expression of the more normal human love which labors either selfishly for the attainment of its desires or unselfishly for the good of the beloved object has here no place. Petrarchistic love labors not at all. It does not deal with action, but with self-pity, introspection, and the most perfect artistic phrasing of purely subjective feeling. Petrarch was indeed somewhat interested in his lady, but he was very much more interested in himself: from his *Rime* we learn next to nothing about Laura, but a great deal about Petrarch.

The Petrarchistic love situation was essentially static, not dynamic. By the terms of the hypothesis it could have no outcome. The lover does not act; he simply feels, and his variety of feeling is all conditioned by the larger unity of the unchanging situation. Eternal fidelity to an unresponsive mistress is the theme of nine-tenths of the Renaissance sonnets, and this theme does not permit development in time. The term "sonnet-sequence" as applied to these collections is an entire misnomer. With the exceptions of Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, the narrative element is rarely to be found in the Elizabethan or other Renaissance sonnets, and when found at all, as in a few connected sonnets of Watson and Barnes, it consists in conventional skirmishes of the lover's heart with Cupid, and has practically nothing to do with development of the lover's real situation.

All of this follows, because, to put it in a formula, the Petrarchistic conception of love considers it solely as an emotion, not as an ideal governing action. In this central conception dwelt the destructive vice of the mood, because it is not a conception that accords with the usual facts of human nature. A love that subsists upon itself, that seeks no return and rests satisfied with its own devotion and worship, may be truly religious, and in a noble soul like Petrarch's it may be productive of lofty poetry, but it is not the normal love of man for woman. Unfortunately, however, it is the kind of love that will always make a powerful appeal to a certain type of sentimental poet. In its subjective raptures he seems to enjoy all the bliss of the situation without any of the dangers attendant upon acted passion or any of the sacrifices involved in unselfish love. Furthermore, it is a type of emotion which lends itself rather easily to pretense and empty compliment; especially in the Renaissance it was quite possible for passionate devotion to degenerate into court

flattery that expected nothing further from the honored lady than kindly patronage, and was so understood by herself, her husband, and all concerned. The convenient ambiguity of Petrarchistic love recommended it to a sophisticated society. When after a century of relative obscurity following Petrarch's death, the sonnet form was revived in Italy, partially through the Spanish influences of Boscan and Garcilasso de la Vega, the papal court at Rome and the royal court at Naples had brought together in those cities a society of extraordinary culture, brilliance, and artificiality. It was in these cities especially that the sonnet now reached its apogee of popularity in the hands of Cariteo, Tebaldeo, Serafino, Bembo and Vittoria Colonna, and it was to this society that it made its appeal.

In the poems of these sonneteers actual passion *seems* to be at a minimum and formal dexterity at a maximum. The extravagant similes of Cariteo, the extravagant metaphors of Tebaldeo, the worse than extravagant conceits of the grandiloquent Serafino, the lacrimose and limpid utterance of Bembo, the gentle sorrow of the saintly Vittoria, all of these have but the shadow of Petrarch's realism. None the less, we should be cautious in denying the existence of autobiographic elements in them. It is imaginative rather than literal sincerity that is plainly lacking. Extravagance and overstatement prove the absence of art rather than the absence of feeling. It has never been denied, for instance, that Vittoria Colonna loved her husband, the Marquis of Pescara—however much of a scoundrel he may have been in public matters—or that her sonnets inscribed to him were heartfelt tributes to his memory. Even the verses of Serafino which assign the cause of his lady's nosebleed to the misdirection of Cupid's arrow aimed at her heart, prove only that Serafino was no poet; they fail to prove he was no lover. Indeed, in regard to this same Serafino we should remember that he was stabbed and driven from Milan by the husband of a lady whose praises he had been singing. If such an unpleasant adventure could happen to the most conventional and apparently least sincere of all sonneteers, we dare not lightly deny an equal reality to the loves of others. The actual situation in regard to love and gallantry at this time in Italy is clearly put before us by Baldassare Castiglione in the third book of his *Courtier* (A. D. 1514), wherein ladies

are warned not to believe too readily in the flowing compliments of a mere admirer, and not to distrust too harshly the real homage of a genuine lover. This statement makes it plain that the languages of love and gallantry were so nearly identical that it was a matter of grave difficulty even for contemporaries to distinguish between the true and the false coin.

When the sonnet found its way to France, the social situation there was much the same as in Italy. Aside from a few scattering sonnets of Marot, Melin de St. Gelais, and the Lyons school led by Maurice Scève, the form was first used by the Pléiade. The two leaders of that group, Ronsard and Du Bellay, who were primarily responsible for the introduction of the sonnet into their country, were both courtiers turned aside from the direct path of courtly ambition through physical impediments. Their copious follower, Desportes, remained a courtier all his life. Of the love sonnets of the three, Du Bellay's are bookish and imitative, the best of Ronsard's are spontaneous, tender, with a love of nature and undertone of song, while those of Desportes are full of elaborate conceits and horrible examples of perverted ingenuity. All three are alike, however, in that there seems probably to have been a real mistress addressed in every case, while they are also alike, and at one with the lesser French sonneteers, Pontus de Tyard, Claude de Pontoux, De Baif, and Jodelle, in offering close imitations of Petrarch and the other Italians. The *genre* as a whole can hardly be said to undergo any marked change of temper or style through its French handling.

In England, however, where the sonnet reached efflorescence after its decline in Italy and France, an alteration in both temper and style is apparent. At its very first introduction by Wyatt and Surrey there is manifest in both writers a tendency toward greater masculinity and virility of content, and a desire for some change in the stylistic form. Whereas Ronsard, Du Bellay, and their followers had been content to adopt the Petrarchan form and use it without deviation, the English writers, fortunately or unfortunately, felt impelled from the outset to make experiments. Thus we find Surrey, in addition to the productive form "a, b, a, b, c, d, c, d, e, f, e, f, g, g," also using forms "a, b, a, b, a, b, a, b, a, b, c, c," "a, b, b, a, c, d, d, c, e, f, f, e, g, g," "a, b, a, b, a, b, a, b, a, c, c, c, c,"

while Wyatt not only experimented with rimes, but wrote one thirteen-line and two twelve-line "sonnets," and Thomas Watson, the next English poet in the field, adopted eighteen lines as the standard measure of his *Hekatompathia*. As late as 1595 Spenser wrought out a special form for his own use—"a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c, c, d, c, d, e, e," and in 1597 the voluminous *Laura* of Robert Tofte was in alternate ten- and twelve-line "sonnets." Many other less important deviations from Italian models could easily be pointed out. The distinctively English epigrammatic final couplet came to be used almost universally, even by writers like Sidney, who retained the Italian octave; and the usual Surrey form, "a, b, a, b, c, d, c, d, e, f, e, f, g, g," was adopted by the vast majority of Elizabethan sonneteers—Watson (*Tears of Fancy*), Daniel, Barnes, Lodge, Fletcher, Percy, the anonymous author of *Zepheria*, Drayton, Griffin, Lynche, Smith, Davies, Shakespeare.

We should naturally expect to find that this general substitution of a new verse-form was connected with a change of temper. The so-called "Shakespearean form," whatever its ultimate aesthetic merits or demerits as contrasted with the Petrarchan form, is manifestly adapted for greater emphasis upon the intellectual elements involved. A sheer emotion in its self-sufficiency, without thought of its own cause or its effect, can well be diffused along the roll of the Petrarchan octave and then either concentrated or dissipated with the backward ebb of the sextette. The analytic intellect, however, can work much more effectively in a smaller space; nay, by its very nature must tend to differentiate such smaller spaces from one another; it can appear to better advantage in quatrains than in octaves, and can appear best of all in couplets. The Elizabethan uses the final couplet to give intellectual pith and point to what has preceded; it carries the significance of the whole, and is the climax of the sonnet. The rationalism of the English sonneteers is also shown in some change of attitude toward the lady, the inspiration of their songs. At the very beginning a note of remonstrance and audacious resistance to her sovereignty is heard; Wyatt in an ungallant moment even calls his mistress "an old mule," and somewhat the same temper is continued more gracefully by Drayton and Giles Fletcher. Yet it would be easy to overestimate this

element of rougher realism in the English sonnet, for it exists in the main as a tendency rather than an actuality, and was probably entirely unsuspected by the poets themselves.

On the other hand, the dependence upon foreign models must be admitted to have been far more than a tendency, as Mr. Lee has amply shown. The determination in full of the exact influence of individual Italian and French sonneteers upon individual English sonneteers will offer interesting problems in comparative literature for some time to come, but as to the bulk of such influence there can be no longer any question. The generally imitative character of the Elizabethan sonnet is established beyond a doubt. We may safely say that with the exception of Shakespeare and Sidney, the English sonneteers were all guilty either of open translation or of secret plagiarism from Italian, French, or even contemporary English poets; with the exception of Shakespeare all copied foreign models so closely that the tracing of their sources has become merely a matter of time; without exception all utilized the same images, comparisons, and themes.

But as to the reality of the love that is poetized we are left without much external evidence. We do indeed know that the English sonnet was used both for fact and for fiction; Spenser's sonnets in 1595 to the lady he was then wooing for his wife demonstrate the former, while Giles Fletcher's asseverations that his "Licia" may be considered as "Learning's Image, or Discipline, or some College, or simply his conceit (that) pretends nothing," is conclusive of the latter. Somewhere between these two extremes probably lie the great majority of the sonnets. The type itself is manifestly very varied in content, and may admit all degrees of sincerity from the speech of simple compliment to that of heart-burning devotion. It was at that time the traditional form through which the poet if he were a lover naturally expressed his affection, and if he were a courtier expressed his flattery. The question can hardly be determined in individual cases on internal evidence alone, and satisfactory external evidence is in most instances still to seek.

Yet the personal sincerity of the Renaissance sonneteers has been attacked mainly on internal evidence. Complete conventionality of utterance is the charge, and this conventionality is held to be

incompatible with individual emotion. Here the temperamental inability of the present-day Anglo-Saxon mind to form a rational conception of the true function of conventionality has doubtless been one reason for the lack of sanity in English sonnet criticism as contrasted with the French. To the average Englishman or American of today, social conventions seem disagreeable but salutary restraints upon the savage tendencies of the individual, who should on no account be permitted to contravene them, but who may be allowed in compensation to express the ill-humor they cause him by as much grumbling as he pleases. To the Frenchman, on the other hand, conventions are likely to appear simply as amiable contrivances for getting along with his neighbors, which are to be enjoyed while they last and changed as soon as they become burdensome. In this ability to live harmoniously under convention, the Renaissance Englishman was more like the modern Frenchman than like his own descendants, and in regard to him it is a false assumption that conventionality of speech necessarily proves insincerity of feeling. It is clear that the Renaissance sonneteers were not striving for individuality of expression but, like Renaissance painters, for the best possible treatment of universal types of beauty. Now, all the highest types of the beauty of hopeless love seemed to have been set forth by Petrarch, and it therefore remained for the later poets only to strive to rival or outdo him in the treatment of these same topics. The themes are fixed, but the sonneteer shows his individuality in his special way of treating them. It no more follows because the method of the sonneteers was alike that their individual loves were unreal, than it does that because mediaeval tournaments were all much alike, therefore the warriors did not fight in honor of individual ladies.

Let us look at the more prominent of these repeated sonnet themes. The amount of the repetition, it may freely be confessed, can hardly be overestimated. The eternizing motive appears, among other poets, in Ronsard, Sidney, Daniel, Constable, Fletcher, Drayton, Spenser, Shakespeare; the "carpe diem" motive is sung by Ronsard, Surrey, Daniel, Barnes, Shakespeare; the lover's love is compared to flame, the lady's chastity to ice, by all the sonnet-writers of the period, Shakespeare alone excepted; the lover's con-

dition is likened to a wrecked ship by Petrarch, Ronsard, Desportes, Constable, Barnes, Lodge, Spenser; the lady's hair is fancied to be a net in which the lover is imprisoned by Petrarch, Ronsard, Daniel, Constable, Griffin; the lover's sufferings under the attacks of Cupid are moaned by Petrarch, Ronsard, Desportes, Sidney, Watson, Barnes, Fletcher, Percy, Griffin, Lynche, Drummond of Hawthornden. So the list might be carried on almost indefinitely; the lover's desolation is again and again contrasted with the peace and beauty of springtime; again and again are his sleepless nights described; the violence of his tears, sighs, and groans troubles the heavens; conflicts between his heart and his reason occur, debates between his heart and his eyes; his mistress is described in similes of roses, violets, lilies, marigolds, diamonds, pearls, rubies, ivory, sun, moon, and stars.

The fact of wholesale imitation is indubitable, but can this fact be made to prove wholesale insincerity? On the contrary, the ideas underlying almost all of the conceits above mentioned are of a nature to be readily emotionalized. It is a truism that love is much the same the world over; exaggerated admiration of the lady's beauty, experience of sleepless nights, sense of conflict between passion and reason, these and such as these are generic characteristics of all love. Objection to their over-emphasis in poetry should be made because of their commonplaceness, not because of their personal insincerity. The sonneteers all tell of sorrowful absences from their mistresses, but where is the love of any length that has not had at one time or another this sadness to endure? Many of them follow Petrarch and sing of the rivers beside which their ladies live, but it is not intrinsically unlikely that many ladies then as now may actually have resided somewhere in the vicinity of rivers. And if a goodly number of the sonneteers at one time or another lament the lady's sickness, that too is no uncommon experience of human life. What conventionality of this kind proves is, I repeat, lack of imagination rather than lack of emotion. Given an unoriginal, unimaginative poet, and though his passion burn like a volcano, the result will be only the traditional lava and ashes of outworn conceits. To prove personal insincerity it is not sufficient to find repetition of themes which do not in the first instance spring from individual

experience but may nevertheless be in harmony with it; it is necessary to find repetition of themes that directly contradict individual experience. If we could find conceits in general use which yet were applicable only to the initial situation, manifestly their continuance by others would be a mark of insincerity. But examples of such themes are not forthcoming. Such would be, indeed, if its existence should be substantiated, the conceit asserted by Mr. Lee to have been common, of naming three years as the duration of the poet's passion, but I have searched in vain through the Elizabethan sonnets in an endeavor to add to the two rather unsatisfactory examples which Mr. Lee himself gives. That the conventionality of the sonnet motives taken in conjunction with the known use of the form for purposes of flattery, and the element of pose likely to be involved in Petrarchan love at its best, is sufficient to justify us in characterizing the sonnet mood in general as an artificial one I should not deny, but in the case of any individual sonneteer this characterization should be applied with the greatest caution, and in the case of no individual sonneteer can the argument from artificiality of expression be regarded without the support of external evidence as exclusive of literal sincerity.

The same may be asserted even of the many translations that occur. There is no *a priori* reason why a translation cannot be made in an impassioned mood as well as, or better than, in a frigid one. Why, for example, may not certain sonnets of Desportes have seemed to Thomas Lodge to express his own feelings better than he himself could do, and why may not Lodge have proceeded with their translation in a high state of genuine emotion? In fact, it may be doubted if good poetic translations are often made unless the translator is able in some such way to put himself in close harmony with the original poet's feelings. Criticism in its eagerness to obtain final judgment has hurried in its indictments against the literal sincerity of the sonneteers altogether too hastily, and an induction that should be provisional and cognizant of exceptions has been treated as if it were absolute and without exception.

When we come to the question of imaginative sincerity the situation is somewhat different. Here the point involved concerns the relation of a poet's emotion to his expression of the emotion, or,

in a word, whether he says what he really means. For example, Byron's famous "Fare thee well" is a good illustration of imaginative insincerity. Without reference at all to the private events that inspired the poem, we see simply from reading it that the poet is saying something quite different from what he really means, and that the whole poem is in effect a denial of its title. He says, "Never 'gainst thee will my heart rebel," and then proceeds to show how rebellious his heart actually is. This is an instance of self-deception analogous to the self-deception of the Petrarchists. They say that their lives are dominated by the desire to win the lady's love, when it is manifest that their desire really is to sing their own love; they say that the lady's coldness causes all the miseries of life, when in their hearts they must know better; they say that their tears flow down and make rivers which are then dried up by the heat of their passionate sighs, when they know that this is not quite true; they say that they are frozen like ice when they mean that they are bashful, burning like a furnace when they mean slightly ardent, dying when they mean despondent. It is not because their love itself has no basis in fact that we object to all this, but because we know that no love could possibly justify the hyperboles. Whether or not poetry be literally true, it must be emotionally true, if it is to deserve its name. Fiction may serve the cause of poetry in spite of any amount of personal untruth, but exaggeration is necessarily a bad servant because of its artistic untruth. And exaggeration, rather than personal fiction, was the standard coinage of the sonneteers.

No better example of the results to which a loss of the clear sense of literary values may lead could be adduced than the tendency to confound the imaginative value and sincerity of Shakespeare's sonnets with that to be found in the work of his contemporaries. The mistake has largely arisen from the old-fashioned tendency to regard the Shakespearean sonnets as a unit, and to assume that what can be said of any of them applies equally well to all. That some of them belong among the most conventional and conceited sonnets of the century has never been doubted, though it may be said that here as often elsewhere Shakespeare was unconventionally conventional. When he takes up a convention he tends to carry it to its logical extreme as his contemporaries could not do. I doubt if the punning

sonnets on his own name (sonnets 135, 136), or the sonnet treating the theme of his love's being painted on his own heart (sonnet 24), can quite be equaled for perverse ingenuity among all his contemporaries. So the other conventionalities that he adopts are either unusually intellectualized or unusually emotionalized.

But the whole matter of the conceits in Shakespeare's sonnets has recently been emphasized more than it deserves. The following are practically all the important instances: punning, sonnets 135, 136, 143; the conceit of the portrait of his beloved as painted on his heart, sonnet 24; personification of eyes and heart, sonnets 46, 47; play upon the idea of the four elements, sonnets 44, 45; elaborate legal similes, sonnets 46, 87, 134; purely Petrarchistic complaints of the lady's cruelty, sonnets 57, 58, 139, 140, 149; tendency to see his beloved in all the objects of Nature, sonnets 98, 99, 113, 114; comparison of his beloved to people of the past, sonnets 59, 106; love-wracked, sleepless nights, sonnets 27, 28, 43, 61; the eternizing theme, lamentation over the passage of youth and beauty, and consolation in the thought of his beloved's eternity in his own poetry, sonnets 15, 18, 19, 54, 55, 60, 63, 64, 65, 81, 100, 101, 107. It will be seen that with the exception of the last, these conceits appear in only twenty-six out of the total collection of one hundred and fifty-four sonnets—surely a small proportion. In regard to the eternizing theme, I should myself have characterized it as a natural although conventional thought rather than as a conceit, but I place it in the list out of deference to Mr. Lee, to whom it is a source of peculiar umbrage. Why talk so repetitiously, he says, of the brevity of physical beauty and the eternity of poetry? These ideas were outworn when they came to Shakespeare; surely they could have inspired in him no "genuine emotion"; he must have used them simply for purposes of flattery. But in answer it should be pointed out that it is rather curious that this theme was emphasized most by the three poets of the century who actually had the greatest right to expect immortality for their verses. Pierre de Ronsard, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare were the ones who expressed the thought most frequently and most nobly. Why is it impossible that these men should have sincerely believed in the permanence of poetry, or that this thought should have given them deep emotion? And if in

regard to the passing of beauty we do not doubt the sincerity of Keats when he reiterates the same strain, why shall we not be permitted to believe in that of Shakespeare? These ideas are so universal, so moving, so intrinsically poetical, that to account for their presence, even in the special form of promising eternity to a particular person, we hardly need to assume a hollow endeavor at flattery as their cause. A sufficient explanation would seem to be that among the many current poetical conceptions of the time these were particularly congenial to Shakespeare's world-brooding mind.

On the whole, the surprising fact in connection with the Shakespearean sonnets is that conventional ideas and conceits are as few as they are. His was the largest Elizabethan collection of love-sonnets; yet no contemporary collection of a quarter the size exists in which there will not be found many more conceits and conventionalities. The eternal tears and sighs of the lover, his despair, his long-continued dying for the sake of the beloved, the elsewhere omnipresent alternate fire and ice of the lover's passion and his fears, the hackneyed classical allusions, these receive no countenance from Shakespeare. He alone was never caught in the net of his lady's hair or imprisoned in her eyes; we have no evidence from him that she was ever sick, or that she lived beside a river; she is not shown to us in similes of jewels or precious stones. One reading Shakespeare's sonnets by themselves is likely to be unduly sensitive to the conceits that are to be found there, but one reading them after acquaintance with the work of his contemporaries is continually surprised by the absence of the well-known and expected phraseology. In the matter of translation, likewise, Shakespeare stands apart from the other Elizabethans. The two playful sonnets at the end of the collection and entirely unconnected with any of the others have their source in the Greek anthology, and sonnets 99 and 24 were probably imitated from Constable. With these two exceptions, translations or plagiarisms have not been found in Shakespeare, while both are plentiful among practically all of his contemporaries.

It is not, however, by the absence of the conventional but by the presence of the unconventional that the individuality of the Shakespearean sonnet is chiefly marked. In the first place, the

employment of the language of passionate love toward a man was, although not unprecedented, still decidedly unusual—how unusual we may judge from the fact that Michelangelo's similar love-sonnets to Tommaso Cavalieri were considered by his posthumous editor too daring to permit of their publication without alteration, and by the fact that Barnfield found it necessary to apologize for similar utterances in 1595 on the ground that they were imitations of Virgil's second eclogue. The exact number of the Shakespearean sonnets that are addressed to a man has not been conclusively determined, and probably never will be, but we are justified in saying that the majority, and among these the most passionate, were addressed to the "Master-mistress" rather than the mistress. Mr. Lee has justly pointed out the element of adulation apparent in some of these sonnets, but this is far less prominent than the expression of devoted affection and friendship that dominates the group. The collection must still be considered in the main as an idealization of masculine friendship, and in this respect falls outside the general convention of the sonnet. Still more striking is Shakespeare's wholly un-Petrarchistic attack upon the morality of his mistress. Mr. Lee has indeed cited a number of alleged parallelisms from poems of Ronsard and others calling their mistresses "tigresses" and "Medusas" because of their hard hearts, but the cases are not in point, since these remonstrances are caused by the immovable chastity of the mistress, while in Shakespeare they are caused by her fickle unchastity. Most striking of all Shakespeare's unconventionalities is his emphasis upon mutuality of love. Shakespeare does not represent himself as a rapt worshiper of unattainable beauty whose function is to inspire him with poetic sadness and hopeless fidelity. On the contrary, the "Dark Lady" is one who has rewarded Shakespeare's passion in the past, and who, when she is now faithless to him, is rebuked most bitterly. The same freedom of criticism hardly appears in the sonnet to the friend, where Shakespeare tends to regard the friend's errors with an unpleasant complacency, yet even here warning and remonstrance are not lacking, and both Shakespeare and the friend seek forgiveness for their faults in a manner unknown to the conventional sonnet. The situation celebrated by Petrarch and his followers is one of hopeless and uncom-

plaining love; the situation in Shakespeare's sonnets is one of expectant and jealous love.

Thus is avoided one of the fundamental self-deceptions of the Petrarchists. In reading even Petrarch himself one cannot but be conscious at times that the poet's pleasure in singing his sorrows so well is in some danger of obliterating the real sorrows. Among his followers there was an undoubted tendency for the love to exist primarily for the sake of the poetry it inspired. Of Shakespeare this is far less true than of any other Renaissance sonneteer, excepting Michelangelo, who stands aside from the general sonnet movement here considered. Shakespeare seems to be closely in contact with the minds of his friend and his mistress; the emotions flash back and forth from one to another; the feelings are not compressed within one static formula, but there is change, development, retrogression. Whether we will or no, we feel ourselves to be in the midst of some dimly outlined, unintelligible, but intensely real and vivid story.

The second great deception of Petrarchistic love is also avoided by Shakespeare. It had become the universally accepted superstition of the sonneteers, even as of the modern novel, that romantic love is not only the chief blessing of earthly existence, but that it is actually the be-all and the end-all. Sadness, sorrow, and even death, appear only as experiences connected with love between the sexes. For the typical Petrarchist to have repined for any other cause than the loss of his mistress would have seemed a kind of sacrilege. In Shakespeare all this is changed. The misfortunes of life are given their true place as results from many causes. In sonnet 29 the poet's sorrow arises from his self-doubt, recognition of his "disgrace with fortune and men's eyes," "desire for this man's art and that man's scope"; in sonnet 30 he beweeeps "precious friends hid in death's dateless night"; in sonnet 66 he contemplates with bitterness the injustice of human life; and in each case the thought of his friend's love comes to him as a consolation. What could be more completely opposed to the usual sonneteering conventions? To the Petrarchist, however great the real joys with which he is surrounded, love is sufficient to spoil them all and turn them into sentimental sorrow; to Shakespeare, however great the real sorrow, his love is sufficient

to mitigate it and bring consolation. Likeness to these three sonnets will be sought in vain among all the other Renaissance sonneteers, excepting again Michelangelo. And if ever poetry carried in its features the indubitable marks of genuine emotion, these three sonnets of Shakespeare, and a dozen others in only a slightly less degree, are among the noblest witnesses of that power in ours or any language.

Realism as opposed to sentimentalism is the fundamental note of Shakespeare's greatest sonnets as compared with those of his contemporaries. If this be true we should expect to find more reference to specific incidents in his poetry than in theirs. And this is just what we do find. The definite theme of the threefold intrigue with its strange events of the friend's faithlessness and seduction of the poet's mistress, his repentance, and his forgiveness by the poet, is, as Mr. Lee himself admits, wholly unprecedented in sonnet literature. To be sure, Mr. Lee can find only six sonnets that bear upon this intrigue, but all other editors have been more fortunate. In addition to the six that in so many words refer to this situation (sonnets 40, 41, 42, 133, 134, 144), it surely is reasonable to refer to the same situation sonnets 33-35 with their description of his friend as "that sweet thief which sourly robs from me," their reference to his friend's "sensual fault," and his sorrow and forgiveness by the poet; also sonnets 94-96 with their remonstrances upon the friend's conduct, which is leading to "lascivious comments" and "shame" upon the budding beauty of his name; also the twelve sonnets of remonstrance to his mistress and comment upon her lack of beauty (137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152); also, not certainly, but plausibly, sonnet 129, on lust; thus making a total, not of six, but of twenty-four or twenty-five. Long after this special intrigue had terminated, judging from the poet's own statement of the lapse of three years and the internal evidence of developing style, it was Shakespeare's turn to apologize for his forgetfulness and fickleness (sonnets 117, 118, 119, 120). Further unusual specific references are those to the rival poet (sonnets 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 85, 86)—references that are specific, we must remember, even though we cannot now identify their object—and those in the situation outlined in the introductory exhortations to the youth to

wed for the sake of offspring (sonnets 1-17). Descending to minor points, we have Shakespeare's recognition of the social ignominy of his profession in sonnet 111, his references to slanders against his friend (sonnets 69, 70), and to the scandal circulated against himself (sonnets 112, 121), and finally, of a more frivolous nature but no less indicative of the poet's spontaneity, his vigorous attack on the use of cosmetics and false hair (sonnets 67, 68). All these are the result of the poet's keen conception of a definite group of characters related in certain objective situations, differing entirely from the almost purely subjective situation of the Petrarchistic sonnet, and differing from it by its greater realism.

Shakespeare's superiority to his sonneteering predecessors and contemporaries lies therefore not only in his unmatched technique, but also in the greater truth and depth of his attitude toward life. His sonnets show us feelings that are convincing and intensely human; we have in them a pre-eminent example of imaginative sincerity. Such is the conclusion which I have chiefly had at heart to prove. The question whether Shakespeare's attitude was the direct result of personal experience is one of ultimately minor importance, however great its significance for our knowledge of the personal life of Shakespeare. That significance, certainly, I do not in the least wish to minimize. The fact that we have failed to identify and may never identify the friend, mistress, and rival poet is no sufficient evidence of their non-existence, and the appeal to the literal insincerity of the sonnet type can be disregarded until this insincerity shall be more adequately proved than it has yet been. The supposition of literal sincerity on Shakespeare's part still seems to me probable. I believe that in his sonnets we listen to a chapter from Shakespeare's own life. But whether true or false this belief is not the more important matter. The essential conclusion is that Shakespeare's sonnets are not merely examples of skilful rhythm and melodious diction, nor at all examples of timid conformity to an artificial type, but that they are true poems, powerful emotions beautifully expressed, a chapter in the history of Man.

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AN ENGLISH ACADEMY¹

Interesting in the annals of English literary and linguistic history is a series of proposals for an English academy. Mention of such proposals is perhaps oftenest met with in connection with the reign of Queen Anne. Then indeed the idea, though by no means new, found its most peculiar and insistent manifestation. Yet the movement toward an academy was not confined to any one period; the proposals extended over some two centuries. They are here brought together in chronological order.

It is customary to associate this movement with the French Academy, founded at the suggestion of Cardinal Richelieu in 1635. Long before that time, however, there had been in England various learned societies, notably a Society of Antiquaries² dating from the reign of Elizabeth, 1572. Its founder was Archbishop Parker, and for several years its meetings were held at the house of Sir Robert Cotton. In 1589 it was chartered by the queen as "An Academy for the Studye of Antiquity and History." Its active existence continued into the reign of James. That monarch, for reasons not very clear, possibly on mere suspicion, dissolved the society, probably in 1604. This is apparently the first learned society to enjoy royal favor. Its aims were distinctly historical.

The earliest hint of anything like an authoritative literary society is contained in a letter by Gabriel Harvey to Edmund Spenser, 1580. Harvey has reference chiefly to poetry.

There is no one more regular and iustifiable direction, eyther for the assured, and infallible Certaintie of our English Artificiall Prosodye particularly, or generally to bring our Language into Arte, and to frame a

¹ For the suggestion which led to the preparation of this paper and for a part of the material used, I am indebted to a letter in the *Nation* by Professor Ewald Flügel, of Leland Stanford Junior University, and to replies which that letter brought forth. The extent of this obligation may be seen by reference to the correspondence: *Nation*, LXXIV, 287 (E. Flügel); 306 (H. E. Shepherd); 365 (W. A. Neilson); 406 (Henrietta R. Palmer); 425 (G. L. K[ittredge]).

² *Archaeologia*, I, iii. Further details are now available in "A proiect touching a petition to be exhibited unto her Maiesty for the erecting of her library & an Academy," which Flügel has printed, from a Cottonian manuscript, in *Anglia*, XXXII, 265 ff. (1909).

Grammer or Rhetorike thereof: than first of all vniuersally to agree vpon one and the same Ortographie.

This he hopes to see "publickely and autentically established, as it were by a generall Counsel, or acte of Parliament."¹ This, however, a mere suggestion thrown out in a private letter, naturally led to no results.

To the same early period belongs a remark of Richard Carew, an antiquary who remembered the society of Elizabeth's time and who knew of academies on the continent. On April 7, 1605, he wrote to Sir Robert Cotton:

It importes no little disgrace to our Nation, that others have so many Academeyes, and wee none at all, especially seeing wee want not choice of wyttes every waye matcheable with theirs, both for number and sufficiency.²

In 1616 or 1617 Edmund Bolton (1575-1633), a distinguished and zealous antiquary, came forward with a scheme for a larger society, having in view both antiquarian and literary³ objects. Through Buckingham he caught the King's ear and presented a petition or plan of organization for a "Corporation Royal to be founded under the title of King James his Academe or College of Honour."⁴ This proposed in substance a new honorary order, "an order within the Order of St. George . . . a narrow circle within a large, concentrick," having arms, ribbon, seal, etc. James was impressed so favorably that he added functions not specifically asked for. One of these having his express sanction was that "it should be theirs to authorize all books and writings which were to go forth in print," and "to give the vulgar people indexes expurgatory and expunctory upon all books of secular learning." The society, then, so far as concerned literature, was to pass upon matter rather than manner.

Among the proposed members were many famous in history, science, law, diplomacy, and literature: Edmund Bolton, the originator, George Chapman, Sir Edward Coke, Sir Robert Cotton, Sir

¹ Haslewood, *Ancient Critical Essays*, II, 265.

² *Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men*, ed. Sir Henry Ellis, Camden Society (1843), 99.

³ Bolton's interest in literature and history is attested by his *Hypercritica* (1610-17), in Haslewood, *Ancient Critical Essays*, II, 222 f.

⁴ *Archaeologia*, XXXII, 138.

Kenelm Digby, Michael Drayton, Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, John Selden, Sir Henry Spelman, Sir Henry Wotton.

The proposal dragged along slowly, as everything did at James's court. Before all the steps had been taken James died, March, 1625. Charles was apparently too much absorbed in other matters to give Bolton any encouragement. He considered the plan "too good for the times."¹ The whole scheme therefore finally fell through. Antiquarian interests continued, however, though lacking a permanent bond of union, until George II in 1751 granted a charter to the Society of Antiquaries of London, which still exists. This of course never did anything with language and literature as such.

Of other proposals in the early seventeenth century none had literature and language especially in view; the institutions were to be historical or, like Cowley's, philosophical; and they were to be called colleges, giving instruction as well as opportunities for research.² It was not until the Restoration and the consequent renewal of closer social relations with France that the idea of a supreme literary society again sprang up. After the recall of Charles II, writers seeking court favor turned more and more to French literature and French ideals. They knew, of course, of the French Academy, and they saw, or thought they saw, in such an institution a means of improvement. Later attempts, therefore, toward an English academy were more or less imitative. Practically every subsequent proposal specifically refers to the model in France. At any rate, no connection is discernible between the older proposals and those about to be mentioned. Yet even at home the need was felt or fancied, and owing to the peculiar ideas of language then prevalent, continued to be urged. From now on, accordingly, the aim, though often in vague and general terms, was toward "improving" the language.

Meantime the influence of the French Academy had been noted. James Howell wrote in 1650:

The new Academy of Wits call'd l'Academie de beaux esprits, which the late Cardinal Richlieu founded in Paris, is now in hand to reform the

¹ *Archaeologia*, XXXII, 148.

² Some account of these may be seen in Weld, *History of the Royal Society*, I, 19 f., 42 f.

French Language in this particular [viz., in orthography], and to weed it of all superfluous Letters; which makes the Tongue differ so much from the Pen. . . .¹

In 1664 the Royal Society, going outside its customary researches, appointed a committee on the improvement of the English tongue. Of the labors of this committee we have very little record. Among its twenty-one members were Evelyn, Sprat, Dryden, and Sir Peter Wyche; and its meetings were held at Wyche's lodgings in Gray's Inn.² We have, however, under date of June 20, 1665, a long letter from John Evelyn to Sir Peter Wyche, chairman of the committee.

After giving his opinion that

the reason both of additions to, and the corruption of the English language, as of most other tongues, has proceeded from the same causes; namely, from Victories, Plantations, Frontieres, Staples of Com'erce, Pedantry of Schooles, Affectation of Travellers, Translations, Fancy and style of Court, Vernility & mincing of Citizens, Pupils, Political Remonstrances, Theatres, Shoppes, &c.,

Evelyn suggests the following means of reform:

1. I would therefore humbly propose that there might first be compil'd a Gram'ar for the Præcepts; which . . . might onely insist on the Rules, the sole meanes to render it a learned & learnable tongue.
2. That with this a more certaine Orthoggraphy were introduc'd, as by leaving out superfluous letters, &c.: such as *o* in Woomen, People; *u* in Honour . . . &c.
3. That there might be invented some new Periods and Accents, besides such as our Gram'arians & Critics use, to assist, inspirit, and modifie the Pronunciation of Sentences. . . .
4. To this might follow a Lexicon or Collection of all the pure English-Words by themselves; then those which are derivative . . . then, the symbolical; so as no innovation might be us'd or favour'd; at least till there should arise some necessity of providing a new Edition, & of amplifying the old upon mature advice.
5. That in order to this, some one were appointed to collect all the technical Words. . . .

¹ Howell, *Familiar Letters* (ed. Jacobs, 1892), 510; quoted from ed. 1650 by Flügel, *Nation*, LXXIV, 287, who comments: "Howell writes this to justify his own orthographical 'weeding' out of superfluous letters, and perhaps in the hope of stimulating the foundation of a similar institution in England. It is the same Howell who, in 1630, despaired of calling English 'a regular language in regard, though often attempted by some choice wits, ther could never any Grammar or exact Syntaxis be made of it.'"

² Birch, *History of the Royal Society*, I, 499, 500.

6. That things difficult to be translated or express'd were better interpreted than as yet we find them in Dictionaries. . . .

7. That a full Catalogue of exotic Words, such as are daily minted by our *Logodædali*, were exhibited. . . .

8. Previous to this it would be enquir'd what particular Dialects, Idioms, and Proverbs were in use in every several Country of England, for the Words of the present age being properly the *Vernacula*, or Classic rather, special regard is to be had of them.

9. And happily it were not amiss, that we had a Collection of the most quaint and Courtly expressions, by way of *Florilegium*. . . .

10. And since there is likewise a manifest rotation and circling of Words, which goe in and out like the mode and fashion; Bookes would be consulted for the reduction of some of the old layd-aside words and expressions had formerly in *deliciis*. . . .

11. Something might likewise be well translated out of the best Orators & Poets, Greek and Latin, and even out of the Moderne Languages. . . .

12. Finally. *There must be a stock of reputation gain'd by some public writings and compositions of the Members of this Assembly, so that others may not thinke it dishonor to come under the test, or accept them for judges and approbators; And if the designe were arriv'd thus far, I conceive a very small matter would dispatch the art of Rhetoric, which the French propos'd as one of the first things they reco'mended to their late Academicians.*¹

Wyche's efforts came to naught. Only the briefest mention is made of his committee or its work in the *History of the Royal Society* by Birch; none at all in that by Weld; that by Thomson I have been unable to consult. Sprat, who wrote the first history (1667), not only passes over in silence this action by the society, but devotes several pages to his own reflections on the subject. His remark that he has "said nothing but what was before very well known and what passes about in common discourse" indicates that an academy was being somewhat widely discussed. His remarks doubtless reflect contemporary opinion.

But besides, if we observe well the English Language; we shall find, that it seems at this time more then others, to require some such aid, to bring it to its last perfection. The Truth is, it has been hitherto a little

¹ Quoted by Henrietta R. Palmer in *Nation*, LXXIV, 406. The letter, modernized in spelling and punctuation, is in the *Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn* (ed. Bray, 1857), III, 159-62; it is transcribed from the London edition of 1827 in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. E. Spingarn (1908), to whose notes I am indebted for the references to Birch above. There is further mention of the committee in a letter from Evelyn to Pepys (1689), also printed by Spingarn (II, 328f.).

too carelessly handled; and I think, has had less labor spent about its polishing, then it deserves. Till the time of King Henry the Eighth, there was scarce any man regarded it, but Chaucer; and nothing was written in it, which one would be willing to read twice, but some of his Poetry. But then it began to raise itself a little, and to sound tolerably well. . . . if some sober and judicious Men, would take the whole Mass of our Language into their hands, as they find it, and would set a mark on the ill Words; correct those, which are to be retain'd; admit, and establish the good; and make some emendations in the Accent, and Grammar: I dare pronounce, that our Speech would quickly arrive at as much plenty, as it is capable to receive; and at the greatest smoothness, which its derivation from the rough German will allow it.¹

In a later passage, deploring the ease vanity of fine speaking: . . . that of all the Studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtain'd, than this vicious abundance of Phrase, this trick of Metaphors, this volubility of Tongue, which makes so great a noise in the World,

Sprat explains that the members of the Royal Society have put in execution, the only Remedy, that can be found for this extravagance: and that has been, a constant Resolution, to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style. . . . They have exacted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking; . . . preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that of Wits, or Scholars" (pp. 112, 113).

Such a resolution would of course have no influence outside of the society.

It is possible also that the committee or the society deemed such work hardly within its field. Weld² quotes this note by Robert Hooke (an experimental philosopher), preserved in manuscript in the British Museum and dated 1663.

The business and design of the Royal Society is—

"To improve the knowledge of naturall things, and all useful Arts, Manufactures, Mechanick practises, Engynes and Inventions by Experiments—(not meddling with Divinity, Metaphysics, Moralls, Politics, Grammar, Rhetorick, or Logick)."

How far this was Hooke's private view, whether or not it was shared by his associates, is a matter of conjecture. Yet it is probable that such a limitation was approved by the society as a whole;

¹ Sprat, *History of the Royal Society* (1667), 41, 42.

² *History of the Royal Society*, I, 146.

and this may account for the lack of further references to Wyche's committee.

No connection is apparent between Wyche's committee and Bishop Wilkins's *Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language*. This work, dedicated to the Royal Society, was presented at a meeting held May 7, 1668,¹ and later in the year was published by order of the society. Wilkins had no hope of seeing his plans carried out; that could be done only by supreme authority, which presupposes a universal monarchy.² Wilkins's speculations were suggested by the *Ars Signorum* of George Dalgarno; and he seems to have carried on his work independently of his fellow-scientists.

There were also suggestions from more literary quarters during the same decade. About 1662 the earl of Roscommon formed a plan for refining the language and fixing its standard, the result, presumably, of his residence and observation in France. Just what the plan was is not clear. What is said here is on the authority of Johnson.³ Johnson adds that Dryden gave his aid.

That Dryden favored an academy we know from his own critical prefaces. In the first of these, the "Epistle Dedicatory to the Rival Ladies" (1664), he says:

I know not whether I have been so careful of the plot and language as I ought; but, for the latter, I have endeavoured to write English, as near as I could distinguish it from the tongue of pedants, and that of affected travellers. Only I am sorry, that (speaking so noble a language as we do) we have not a more certain measure of it, as they have in France, where they have an Academy erected for that purpose, and endowed with large privileges by the present king.⁴

Again, in the dedication of *Troilus and Cressida*, 1679, Dryden hails the earl of Sunderland as the English Richelieu. After order has been restored,

this great and good man will have leisure for the ornaments of peace; and make our language as much indebted to his care, as the French is to the memory of their famous Richelieu. You know, my lord, how he laid the foundations of so great a work; that he began it with a gram-

¹ Birch, *History of the Royal Society*, II, 281.

² Wilkins, *Works* (1802), II, 255. This volume contains an abstract of the *Essay*. A reprint of Part III may be found in Techmer's *Internationale Zeitschrift*, IV, 339-73.

³ *Works* (1825), VII, 167.

⁴ *Essays of John Dryden* (ed. Ker), I, 5; *Dryden's Works* (ed. Scott and Saintsbury), II, 134.

mar and a dictionary; without which all those remarks and observations, which have since been made, had been performed to as little purpose, as it would be to consider the furniture of the rooms, before the contrivance of the house. . . . I am desirous, if it were possible, that we might all write with the same certainty of words, and purity of phrase, to which the Italians first arrived, and after them the French; at least that we might advance so far as our tongue is capable of such a standard.¹

These fond hopes were not realized. Sunderland, like Harley later, was too deep in intrigues to "make the language indebted to his care." Dryden, too, seems to have lost faith.

We have yet [he wrote in 1693] no English *prosodia*, not so much as a tolerable dictionary, or a grammar; so that our language is in a manner barbarous; and what government will encourage any one, or more, who are capable of refining it, I know not: but nothing under a public expense can go through with it. And I rather fear a declination of the language, than hope an advancement of it in the present age.²

Progress thus far is slight enough. Some representative men merely suggested an academy as desirable. With suggestion the matter ended. No one came forward with a plan of organization, as did Bolton; there was no concerted action whatever. On the other hand, there was no opposition. The projects simply took no hold upon men's minds. The recommendations were too indefinite to enlist sympathy.

From now on, suggestions took a somewhat more definite form. Writers advocating an academy pointed out specific abuses and corruptions which in their opinion called for correction by supreme authority. The idea did not escape the versatile Defoe, who devotes to it one section of his interesting *Essay on Projects* (1697). In praise of William, Defoe rather exaggerates the importance of an academy. Declaring that

the English tongue is not at all less worthy the labour of such a society than the French, and capable of much greater perfection,

he urges the king

to illustrate [i. e., make illustrious] his memory by such a foundation: by which he shall have opportunity to darken the glory of the French king in peace, as he has by his daring attempts in the war.³

¹ *Works* (ed. Scott and Saintsbury), VI, 250-52.

² *Ibid.*, XIII, 118; Ker, II, 110.

³ *Essay on Projects* (1697), 229, 231.

The work of this society [he continues] should be to encourage polite learning, to polish and refine the English tongue, and advance the so much neglected faculty of correct language, to establish purity and propriety of stile, and to purge it from all the irregular additions that ignorance and affectation have introduced; and all those innovations in speech, if I may call them such, which some dogmatic writers have the confidence to foster upon their native language, as if their authority were sufficient to make their own fancy legitimate.

By such a society I dare say the true glory of our English stile would appear; and among all the learned part of the world, be esteemed, as it really is, the noblest and most comprehensive of all the vulgar languages in the world.¹

The voice of this society should be sufficient authority for the usage of words, and sufficient also to expose the innovations of other mens fancies; they should preside with a sort of judicature over the learning of the age, and have liberty to correct and censure the exorbitance of writers.²

The exercises of this society would be lectures on the English tongue, essays on the nature, original, usage, authorities and differences of words, on the propriety, purity, and cadence of stile, and of the politeness and manner in writing; reflections upon irregular usages, and corrections of erroneous customs in words; and in short, everything that would appear necessary to the bringing our English tongue to a due perfection, and our gentlemen to a capacity of writing like themselves; to banish pride and pedantry, and silence the impudence and impertinence of young authors.³

The chief irregularity which Defoe would have his academy interdict was familiar swearing, "cursory oaths, curses, execrations, . . . which are impertinent, insignificant, foolish," making "a jargon and confusion of speech."⁴ His discussion of this point covers ten pages. He then concludes by pointing out how "the manners, customs, and usages of the theater would be decided here; plays should pass here before they were acted, and the criticks might give their censures, and damn at their pleasure; nothing would ever dye which once received life at this original."⁵

This praise of the king finds an echo in the early poetic work of Prior. Dilating upon the coming good and glories of William's rule, he urged the formation of societies of peaceful arts, including

Some that with care true eloquence shall teach,
And to just idioms fix our doubtful speech;

¹ *Essay on Projects* (1697), 233-34.

² *Ibid.*, 237.

³ *Ibid.*, 236.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 238-39.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 250. Defoe discusses also military academies and an academy for women.

That from our writers distant realms may know
 The thanks we to our monarchs owe;
 And schools profess our tongue through every land,
 That has invok'd his aid, or blest his hand.¹

This brings us to the reign of Anne, the time when correctness² was esteemed the chief excellence. Unfortunately those who had much to say did not always practice everything they enjoined. To the theory of correctness, however, they were verbally loyal, until that much-discussed thing became almost a fetish. Someone has mentioned the prim symmetry of Queen Anne gardens, the measured regularity of paths and walls which Pope satirized as

Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
 visible models for writers. Poets might take their cues from landscape gardeners. While Pope was improving his couplets, prose writers were urging refinements in their art which would have driven it equally far from nature.

Characteristic of the time is an essay by Addison in *Spectator*, No. 135, (August 4, 1711). English, the critic declares, has already too many monosyllables,³ and this defect is becoming more and more pronounced, *-ed* ceasing to be syllabic, *-s* taking the place of *-eth*, and two or more words being contracted into one (*can't*, *won't*). If this is allowed to continue, to what will the language be reduced? The suppression of the relative also ought to be stopped. Yet "this will never be decided till we have something like an Academy that, by the best authorities and rules drawn from the analogy of language, shall settle all controversies between Grammar and Idiom."⁴ As before there was a rhymester to add a benediction.

In happy chains our daring language bound,
 Shall sport no more in arbitrary sound.⁵

¹ *Carmen Seculare* (1700), in Chalmers, *British Poets*, X, 163; quoted by Johnson, *Works*, (1825), VIII, 4.

² For a discussion of correctness in the Popean sense see Conington, *Miscellaneous Writings* (ed. Symonds), I, 2 ff.

³ This notion was by no means new. Dryden had spoken of English as consisting "too much of monosyllables" (*Works* [ed. Scott and Saintsbury], VII, 237); "We are full of monosyllables" (*ibid.*, VI, 252). And cf. "Our English tongue of all languages, most swarmeth with the single money of monosyllables, which are the only scandal of it" (Nash, *Christ's Tears* [1594], quoted by Emerson, *History of the English Language*, 86).

⁴ Cf. also *Spectator*, No. 165 (September 8, 1711).

⁵ Tickell, *Prospect of Peace* (1712), in Chalmers, *British Poets*, XI, 105; quoted by Johnson, *Works* (1825), VIII, 4.

Meanwhile Swift was reflecting upon the project and directing his efforts in a way which promised success. His first remarks on the subject appeared in *Tatler*, No. 230 (September 28, 1710). This paper he later (February 22, 1712), amplified into a long letter to the lord treasurer (Harley, earl of Oxford), published in the following May under the title, *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue*. This is the only one of his publications to which Swift attached his own name.

Swift's views were those of his time. He added substantially nothing to the discussion; he merely brought the matter more prominently under the eye of authority. He shared with Addison and others an inexplicable aversion to monosyllables; he would preserve as sacred the ultimate vowels in preterits like *disturbed*, *rebuked*. He inveighed against colloquial contractions like *he's*, *I'd*;¹ against clipped forms like *mob*; and especially against slang (*banter*, *bamboozle*)² and "cant words, the most ruinous corruptions in any language."³ These fancied defects render the "language extremely imperfect"; "its daily improvements are by no means in proportion to its daily corruptions";⁴ whence Swift is convinced that "if you do not take some care to settle our language, and put it into a state of continuance, I cannot promise that your memory shall be preserved above a hundred years, farther than by imperfect tradition."⁵

To preserve the language against such decay (and incidentally to preserve to future admiring generations the fame of the high and righteous Oxford, as well as his cherished queen—the same plea upon which Defoe urged William to make his reign illustrious), Swift would "fix the language forever." "I see no absolute necessity," he says,⁶ "why any language should be perpetually changing."⁷ Why not then make English immutable? To this end

A free judicious choice should be made of such persons, as are generally allowed to be best qualified for such a work, without any

¹ These examples are from the *Tatler*; the more general discussion is in the letter to Oxford.

² Against these "abominable curtailings and quaint modernisms" Swift protested as late as 1737 (Pope, *Works* [ed. Elwin and Courthope], VII, 362).

³ Swift, *Works* (ed. Scott), IX, 348.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 344.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 349.

⁷ In quoting this sentence in his letter to the *Nation*, Professor Flügel says: "Perhaps the climax of Swift's statements is contained in the following words, which show how

regard to quality, party, or profession. These, to a certain number at least, should assemble at some appointed time and place, and fix on rules, by which they design to proceed. . . .

The persons who are to undertake this work will have the example of the French before them, to imitate where these have proceeded right, and to avoid their mistakes. Beside the grammar part, wherein we are allowed to be very defective, they will observe many gross improprieties, which, however authorized by practice, and grown familiar, ought to be discarded. They will find many words that deserve to be utterly thrown out of our language, many more to be corrected, and perhaps not a few long since antiquated, which ought to be restored on account of their energy and sound.

But what I have most at heart, is, that some method should be thought on for ascertaining and fixing our language forever, after such alterations are made in it as shall be thought requisite. For I am of opinion, it is better a language should not be wholly perfect, than that it should be perpetually changing.¹

Swift is careful, however, to provide for one means of growth, if only it be by authority.

When I say, that I would have our language, after it is duly correct, always to last, I do not mean that it should never be enlarged. Provided that no word, which a society shall give a sanction to be afterward antiquated and exploded, they may have liberty to receive whatever new ones they shall find occasion for.²

This last quotation shows how arbitrary is the whole scheme. Upon being constituted, the academy is to issue a monumental codex expurgatorius, ruling out everything deemed corrupting or incorrect. Thereafter the learned body is to be practically a board

little he knew of the historical conditions of the development of language: 'I see no absolute necessity why any language should be perpetually changing'—a statement, though, which Swift may have merely copied from a man whose name even a modern philologist does not mention without humility and reverence, Bentley, who winds up a paragraph in the *earlier* dissertation (ed. Dyce 2, 13): 'Nay, it were no difficult contrivance, if the public had any regard to it, to make the English tongue immutable, unless hereafter some foreign nation shall invade and overrun it.' Cf., however, Bentley's previous statement (Dyce, II, 1): "Every living language, like the perspiring bodies of living creatures, is in perpetual motion and alteration; some words go off, and become obsolete; others are taken in, and by degrees grow into common use; or the same word is inverted to a new sense and notion, which in tract of time makes as observable a change in the air and features of a language, as age makes in the lines and mien of a face."

Jebb, in noting the contradiction, says: "The inconsistency, I think, is only apparent. He refers to the English vocabulary as a whole. By 'immutable' he does not mean to exclude the action of time on details of form and usage, but rather points to such a standard as the French Academy sought to fix for the French language" (*Life of Bentley*, 175).

¹ Swift, *loc. cit.*, 355-56.

² *Ibid.*, 357.

of naturalization, passing upon applicants for admission. In these ways English is to be preserved undefiled by foreign taint or native vulgarism. One wonders how such a hater of shams as Swift, one so quick to see through all forms of pretense, could view the august body here proposed as any less a sham than those ridiculed in *A Tale of a Tub*.

Nothing came of Swift's proposal.¹ During the remaining years of Anne, the lord treasurer was too much occupied with plans of which the dean knew nothing; and the death of the queen drove both into retirement.

The idea of an academy seems to have met the approval of Pope, who is said to have drawn up a list of authors whose works might be taken as a basis of a standard dictionary.² Orator Henley (1692-1756), whose "gilt tub" Pope ridiculed, proposed among other things that should "cultivate, adorn, and exalt the genius of Britain," "to lay the foundations of an English Academy, to give a standard to our language and a digest to our history."³ In 1751 John Boyle, earl of Orrery,⁴ in mentioning Swift's tract, desired an institution to legislate against corruptions. Some power, he says, there should be to prevent the English from marring the Lord's Prayer with a violation of grammar. Chesterfield deemed an academy desirable.⁵ These references show how generally the notion haunted men's minds.

But the time was now at hand when other views should prevail, when an authority actually wielding greater power than an English academy could have maintained should give weight and vogue to saner counsels. However we may estimate Dr. Johnson's knowledge of the life and growth of language, we must applaud his common-sense. This told him that all efforts to regulate and eternally fix a living speech must be futile; and against such futility he often spoke out roundly and soundly. First in point of time are his

¹ In letters to Archbishop King, Swift often mentions his proposal. On September 30, 1712, he wrote: "My lord treasurer has often promised he will advance my design of an academy: so have my lord keeper, and all the ministers . . . but perhaps it may all come to nothing" (*Works* [ed. Sheridan and Nichols, 1813], XV, 241).

² Murray, *Evolution of English Lexicography*, 38.

³ D'Israeli, *Calamities of Authors* (1865), 65.

⁴ *Remarks on Swift* (1752), 99.

⁵ *World*, No. 100 (November 28, 1754).

observations in *The Plan of an English Dictionary* (1747). Here he notes that in language "the first change will naturally begin by corruptions of the living speech"; that by the arrangement of his dictionary "the reader will be informed of the gradual changes of the language"; and, still more to the point:

Thus, my Lord, will our language be laid down, distinct in its minutest subdivisions, and resolved into its elemental principles. And who upon this survey can forbear to wish, that these fundamental atoms of our speech might obtain the firmness and immutability of the primogenial and constituent particles of matter, that they might retain their substance while they alter their appearance, and be varied and compounded, yet not destroyed?

But this is a privilege which words are scarcely to expect: for, like their author, when they are not gaining strength, they are generally losing it. Though art may sometimes prolong their duration, it will rarely give them perpetuity; and their changes will be almost always informing us, that language is the work of man, of a being from whom permanence and stability cannot be derived.¹

In Johnson's later utterances we get more explicit references to an academy, and some pointed criticisms on earlier proposals. Thus in the Preface to the *Dictionary* (1755):

Swift, in his petty treatise on the English language, allows that new words must sometimes be introduced, but proposes that none should be suffered to become obsolete. But what makes a word obsolete, more than general agreement to forbear it? and how shall it be continued, when it conveys an offensive idea, or recalled again into the mouths of mankind, when it has once by disuse become unfamiliar, and by unfamiliarity unpleasing? . . .

If an academy should be established for the cultivation of our stile, which I, who can never wish to see dependance multiplied, hope the spirit of English liberty will hinder or destroy, let them, instead of compiling grammars and dictionaries, endeavour, with all their influence, to stop the license of translators.²

To this subject Johnson devoted a few paragraphs in the sixty-first *Idler* (June 16, 1759). Here, after explaining Dick Minim's

¹ Johnson, *Works* (1825), V. 12. One other passage should be noted. "A new pronunciation will make almost a new speech; and, therefore, since one great end of this undertaking is to fix the English language, care will be taken to determine the accentuation of all polysyllables by proper authorities, as it is one of those capricious phenomena which cannot be easily reduced to rules" (8). The words in italics have sometimes been quoted as showing that Johnson at this time held views similar to Swift's. The two paragraphs above seem to point more conclusively the other way.

² Johnson regarded "frequency of translation" as "the great pest of speech."

plan for an academy of criticism, Johnson sarcastically remarks that Dick's hopes will not be realized "till some happy conjunction of the planets shall dispose our princes or ministers to make themselves immortal by such an academy." This implies that the "happy conjunction" will coincide with the Greek Kalends.

Finally, in the *Lives of Poets* we get a somewhat more sober, definitive pronouncement.

The certainty and stability which, contrary to all experience, [Swift] thinks attainable, he proposes to secure by instituting an academy; the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud to disobey, and which, being renewed by successive elections, would, in a short time, have differed from itself. . . .¹

Such a society might, perhaps, without much difficulty, be collected; but that it would produce what is expected from it, may be doubted. . . .

In this country an academy could be expected to do but little. If the academicians' place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid; and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly.

But suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute governments, there is, sometimes, a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, and the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country needs not to be told. We live in an age in which it is a kind of publick sport to refuse all respect that cannot be enforced. The edicts of an English academy would, probably, be read by many, only that they might be sure to disobey them. . . .

The present manners of our nation would deride authority.²

Nowhere, perhaps, has anyone better stated the dangers of an academy, or anticipated the spirit in which its solemn decrees would be received by English-speaking people.³ Johnson in effect has summarized the whole matter. An academy such as here projected is doomed to failure by the very nature of the task. A living language cannot be cramped into the narrow mold made by an organization necessarily limited. Conclusions reached could be

¹ *Works* (1825), VIII, 202.

² *Ibid.*, VII, 167. Cf. Arthur Murphy's comment on this passage in Hill, *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, I, 436 f.

³ Many will recall the newspaper ridicule heaped upon the Board of Geographic Names, created upon request by President Harrison. The movement toward simplified spelling is too recent to call for comment.

promulgated only as recommendations, never as statutes. Fancy the English-speaking world obeying a mandate upon the omission of the relative. Finally, many, perhaps most, of the questions to be decided would be matters of taste; and taste cannot be regulated by official proclamations. Imagine any body of men conscientiously eliminating "harsh" words complained of by Swift; or admitting, as such, "smooth" words from the female dialect. To outsiders, such a body, however well intentioned, would appear an association of pedants, and be respected accordingly. Justified indeed was Johnson's faith in the spirit of English liberty.

Johnson's dicta put an end to the discussion for many years to come. "He banished," says Professor Flügel, "for at least a hundred years the dreams of regulating the language." With him, therefore, the present investigation may well be closed.

Extended comment by way of conclusion seems unnecessary. The quotations for the most part speak for themselves. Hence I content myself with one general observation.

With respect solely to these proposals, it is perhaps fortunate that the first Hanoverian kings and their ministers gave little heed to literature. It is of course idle to speculate on what might have happened had Queen Anne lived longer, or had George I retained the Tories in power. It is doubtless true, however, that of all the proposals those of Anne's time were assured of the most sympathetic hearing; that an English academy came nearest to founding when Swift penned his letter to Oxford. Had his party survived the change and his influence continued, his cherished dream might have been realized; English grammar might not have had to wait for Lindley Murray; and a safe haven might have been provided for present-day toiling purists. Fortunately the Augustan Age, with its vast possibilities, ended in 1714.

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ADDISON'S INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEREST IN FOLK-POETRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Addison's two essays on the ballad of "Chevy Chase" (*Spectator*, Nos. 70 and 74) and his essay on the "Two Children in the Wood" (*Spectator*, No. 85) are commonly cited as an instance of the ineptness of classical criticism in contact with romantic material; or, if they receive any credit at the hands of the modern historian of literature, it is confined to such acknowledgment as Mr. Beers concedes when he says: "But it was much that Addison, whose own verse was so artificial, should have had a taste for the wild graces of folk-song."¹ As a matter of fact, these essays played a considerable part in developing the vogue of ballad poetry, both on account of the great, if comparatively short-lived, reputation of their author as a literary critic, and on account of the fact that Addison gives expression in them to views distinctly antagonistic to the classical canon. As such, these essays deserve a more serious consideration than has ordinarily been allotted to them.

Of Addison's life-long interest in folk-poetry we have the critic's own evidence. During the continental tour which he made as a young man, "I took," he says, "a particular delight in hearing the songs and fables that are come from father to son, and are most in vogue among the common people of the countries through which I passed."² In an essay on the "Loquacity of the Fair Sex"³ he quotes "that excellent old ballad of the Wanton Wife of Bath:

'I think, quoth Thomas, women's tongues
Of aspen leaves are made.'

Addison's opera *Rosamond*, if we are to believe the somewhat dubious theory which the anonymous editor of the *Old Ballads of 1723*

¹ *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 285.

² *Spectator*, No. 70. Steele also confesses to a keen interest in ballads. See *Spectator*, No. 454, where Steele says that his "unhappy curiosity is such" that he has to take a coach to avoid the temptation to loiter with the ballad-singers. See also *Spectator*, No. 502.

³ *Spectator*, No. 247.

expresses in the Preface to that work, is founded on the ballads which clustered around King Henry's fated mistress. It is, however, to the two *Spectator* essays on "Chevy Chase" and the essay on "The Children in the Wood" that Addison's special significance in ballad-criticism attaches itself.

The idea of writing the two essays on "Chevy Chase" may have been suggested to Addison by the inclusion of "The Ancient and Most Famous Ballad of Chevy Chase, With the Translation of it into Latin by the Command of the Bishop of London," in the third edition of Dryden's *Second Miscellany* (1702).¹ But even without this immediate suggestion, and the popularity of this ballad as indicated by its inclusion in such respectable company, Addison had the best possible authority for a serious treatment of popular literature in general, and "Chevy Chase" in particular. Montaigne had given the French *cachet* to the study of popular poetry.

Popular and purely natural and indigenous poetry [he says²] has a certain native simplicity and grace, by which it may be favourably compared with the principal beauty of perfect poetry composed according to the rules of art; as may be seen in the Villanelles of Gascony, and in songs coming from nations that have no knowledge of any science, not even of writing.

In England, Sir William Temple,³ despite the superciliousness of his general attitude toward folk-poetry, admitted that some of it wanted not the true spirit of poetry in some degree, or that natural inspiration which has been said to arise from some spark of poetical fire wherewith particular men are born; and such as it was, it served the turn, not only to please, but even to charm the ignorant and barbarous vulgar where it was in use.

Further English precedent may be cited in Addison's own words:

I have heard that the late Lord Dorset, who had the greatest wit tempered with the greatest candour, and was one of the finest critics, as

¹ In the *Muses' Mercury* for June, 1707 (pp. 127 ff.) occurs an essay "Of Old English Poets and Poetry," which serves to introduce a reprint of "The Nut Browne Maid." This essay, after enumerating and commenting on a number of specimens of English poetry, says: "Much about the time of Lidgegate was the old poem of 'Chevy Chase' writ. The author of it is not known; but it was in great esteem in the three last centuries, even by men of the best sense." Here follows the usual quotation from Sir Philip Sidney.

As Steele was a contributor to the *Muses' Mercury*, it is possible that he may have been responsible for this essay, and that he may have suggested the subject of "Chevy Chase" to Addison as suitable for a *Spectator* paper—but this is mere conjecture.

² *Essays*, trans. Cotton, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, Vol. I, Essay No. 54.

³ *Essay of Poetry* (1692).

well as the best poets, of his age, had a numerous collection of Old English Ballads, and took a particular pleasure in the reading of them. I can affirm the same of Mr. Dryden; and know several of the most refined writers of our present age who are of the same humour.¹

There was moreover an especial propriety in the selection of "Chevy Chase" for critical discussion. Not only was it (the words are Addison's) "the favourite ballad of the people of England," but Ben Jonson used to say that he had rather have been the author of it than of all of his works.² Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Discourse of Poetry*, speaks of it in the following words, "I never heard the old song of Peirey and Douglas, that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung by some blind Crowder with no rougher voice than rude style; which being so evil appareled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?"³

With such respectable warranty did Addison set about the critical examination of "Chevy Chase." His criticism involves two dissimilar modes of approach, or rather two not very well correlated critical premises. The first of these is that the ultimate test of poetry is simplicity and truth to nature, rather than conformity to the fashions of the day. The second is that a heroic poem (to which class he assumes "Chevy Chase" to belong) must conform to the "rules" "laid down" by "the greatest modern critics." The fact that, after making out a particularly good case for the first of these two propositions, he feels compelled to validate the ballad by finding a number of chance parallels between "Chevy Chase" and the *Aeneid*, is characteristic of the confusion which one finds in much of Addison's criticism. It is clear, indeed, that he feels this inconsistency himself; for he closes his second and last essay on "Chevy Chase" with the remark:

I shall only beg pardon for such a profusion of Latin quotations; which I should not have made use of, but that I feared my own judg-

¹ *Spectator*, No. 85.

² I have been unable to find any other evidence that Ben Jonson, Dorset, or Dryden manifested interest in ballads. The statement commonly made by historians of the eighteenth century (see Hamelius, *Die Kritik in der Eng. Lit. des 17. und 18. Jahrh.*, p. 101, and Beers, *Eighteenth Century Romanticism*, p. 283) that "Dryden included five ballads in the *Miscellanies*" is inaccurate. No ballads were included in the *Miscellanies* published during Dryden's lifetime. In the successive editions of the *Miscellanies* published after 1700, a number of ballads were included.

³ *Spectator*, No. 70.

ment would have looked too singular on such a subject, had not I supported it by the practice and authority of Virgil.¹

The latter of Addison's modes of criticism may be dismissed briefly.

The greatest modern critics [says Addison] have laid it down as a rule that an heroic poem should be founded upon some important precept of morality. . . . Homer and Virgil have formed their plans in this view.²

"Chevy Chase" was written to deter the barons from the feuds and petty quarrels to which they were prone. Hence the "precept" in the last stanza, which Addison quotes with approval:

God save the King and bless the land
In plenty, joy and peace.
And grant henceforth that foul debate
"Twixt noblemen may cease.

Addison was familiar only with the contemporaneous broadside version of the ballad, and was of course unaware that the actual old ballad ends with nothing but the conventional ballad "tag":

Iesue Christ our balys bete,
And to the blys us brynge!
Thus was the hountynge of the Chivyat.
God send us all good endyng!

in which there seems to be little effort to point a particular moral. But even in the enfeebled broadside version which Addison knew, there is enough of the old lust of combat still preserved to prevent even an eighteenth-century doctrinaire, one would think, from seeing in the last stanza anything more than an excrescence on the story.

Again, Addison finds the author of "Chevy Chase" conforming to the rules of epic poetry in choosing a hero from his own country and putting into his mouth heroic and passionate sentiments. The illustrations are obvious and need not detain us. Nor is it worth while to stop over Addison's citations of classical parallels to the poem, except to point out that in the only cases where they are particularly

¹ *Spectator*, No. 74.

² Le Bossu's *Traité du poème épique*, which Addison obviously has in mind, was translated into English in 1695 by "W. F.," and is much quoted by Dryden, Addison, and other critics. Pope prefixed a summary of the *Traité* to his translation of the *Odyssey*. The *Traité* constantly reiterates the prime importance of the moral in epic. "Homer had no other design than to form the manners of his countrymen," says Le Bossu ("W. F.'s" translation, 2d ed., London, 1719, II, 74).

apt, they have to do with passages in the broadside version, but not in the old ballad—such passages having come into being in the broadside through the fatal, but inevitable, process of trying to make the old story “literary.” For example, the lines:

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods
The nimble deer to take,
And with their cries the hills and dales
An echo shrill did make.

Addison seizes upon—attracted by their literary flavor—and cites the parallel from Virgil:

Vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum:
Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata remugit.

The same taste which foisted the passage upon the original made the reviewer find it attractive. It is criticism moving in a circle. In connection with this attitude, it is interesting to find Addison taking issue with Sidney for saying that the style of the ballad is rude. “The apparel [i. e., the diction] is much more gorgeous than many of the poets made use of in Queen Elisabeth’s time,” says our critic—a remark which ought to have suggested to him the idea that an older version may have existed.

The language Addison finds “majestic,” and the numbers “sonorous, sounding and poetical.” The country in which the scene is laid (the phrase is worth noting as coming in 1711) “has a fine romantic situation.” Finally, the mixture of intelligence and timorousness which is so characteristic of Addison comes out amusingly in his remarks on a stanza which he describes but refrains from quoting. The stanza is as follows:

For Witherington needs must I wayle
As one in doleful dumps.
For when his legs were smitten off
He fought upon his stumps.

Says Addison,

In the catalogue of English who fell, Witherington’s behaviour is particularized very artfully, as the reader is prepared for it by the account which is given of him in the beginning of the ballad; though I am satisfied your little buffoon readers (who have seen that passage ridiculed in *Hudibras*) will not be able to take the beauty of it; for which reason I dare not so much as quote it.

A more spontaneous concession to the critical standards of his day is shown in the remark on Earl Percy's lamentation over his enemy. This lamentation "is serious, beautiful and passionate; I must only caution the reader not to let the simplicity of the style, which one may well pardon in so old a poet, prejudice him against the greatness of the thought." One wonders what an Augustan would have done with the bald simplicity and unadorned strength of the genuine old ballad.

The general scheme of criticism applied in the examination of "Chevy Chase" is followed also in the study of the "Two Children in the Wood."¹ To quote his comments and his classical citations would merely be to multiply examples. Suffice it to say that the quotation of classical parallels in a criticism of the "Two Children in the Wood" is even more patently absurd than in an examination of a poem having the heroic proportions of "Chevy Chase."

I have reserved for the end an examination of the most significant passage in these essays of Addison's—a passage in which he spoke better than he knew; and one which—if he had had the courage to live up to it—would have made him a unique figure in early eighteenth-century literary criticism.

It is impossible [he says, in opening the subject of the ballads] that anything should be universally tasted and approved by a multitude, though they are only the rabble of a nation, which hath not in it some peculiar aptness to please and gratify the mind of man. Human nature is the same in all reasonable creatures; and whatever falls in with it, will meet with admirers amongst readers of all qualities and conditions. Molière, as we are told by Monsieur Boileau, used to read all his comedies to an old woman who was his housekeeper, as she sat with him at her work by the chimney-corner, and could foretell the success of his play in the theatre from the reception it met with at his fireside; for he tells us the audience always followed the old woman, and never failed to laugh in the same place.

I know nothing which more shows the essential and inherent perfection of simplicity of thought, above that which I call the Gothic manner in writing, than this: the first pleases all kinds of palates, and the latter only such as have formed to themselves a wrong artificial taste upon little fanciful authors and writers of epigram. Homer, Virgil or Milton, so far as the language of their poems is understood, will please a reader of plain common sense, who would neither relish nor compre-

¹ Accessible to Addison in Chapbook of 1700.

hend an epigram of Martial or a poem of Cowley; so, on the contrary, an ordinary song or ballad that is the delight of the common people, cannot fail to reach all such readers as are not unqualified for the entertainment by their affectation or ignorance; and the reason is plain, because the same paintings of nature which recommend it to the most ordinary reader, will appear beautiful to the most refined.

It is not hard to find so-called sources for this pronouncement of Addison's. Longinus had said, "For when persons of different pursuits, habits of life, tastes, ages, principles, agree in the same joint approbation of any performance, then this union of assent stamps a high and indisputable value upon that performance."¹ Addison's phrase, "the rabble of a nation" sounds like an echo of the sixteenth-century Italian critic, Castelvetro, who believed that "poetry is intended not merely to please, but to please the populace, in fact everybody, even the vulgar mob."² The reference to Molière's old woman reminds us that the influence of that dramatist's appeal to the man of "everyday" common-sense, as against the *précieux*, is perceptible in many of Addison's *obiter dicta*.

Such historical parallels are not hard to find, but they do not impair the significance of this declaration when made in England in the year 1711. At a time when the poetic diction which we associate with Pope had become the supreme standard; at a time when poetry was being written very largely by cultivated Londoners for cultivated Londoners, it was certainly a matter of no slight import—this belief that the approval of "the rabble of a nation" constituted in itself one of the ultimate tests of good poetry.

If there were a lurking spirit of doubt in our minds as to the unconventionality of such a theory in 1711, it would be dispelled by the ridicule to which this declaration of Addison's immediately exposed him. The most severe attack was made by John Dennis, who was a thorn in Addison's side on more than one occasion. Dennis' criticism was written in the same month in which Addison's essay appeared. It was contained in "A Letter to H. C. Esq. Of Simplicity in Poetical Composition, in Remarks on the 70th Spectator." This letter was afterward published in *Letters Familiar, Moral and Critical*, by John Dennis (London, 1721). Dennis asserts that Addi-

¹ *Treatise on the Sublime*, chap. viii, Twining's translation.

² Spingarn, *Lit. Crit. in the Renaissance*, p. 56.

son's purpose is "to see how far he can lead his reader by the nose." Proof of this design Dennis sees in Addison's "absurd and ridiculous" statement that the approval of the rabble of a nation is evidence of some peculiar aptness in the poem to please and gratify the mind of man. The idea of the mind of man, says Dennis, is obviously incompatible with the idea of the rabble. Addison's illustration of Molière's "old woman" is equally absurd, for poetry is intended to elevate human nature, and not to cater to such vulgar taste as that of a housekeeper. To make the approval of the rabble necessary is to insinuate that all those songs or ballads, which are the delight of the rabble, cannot fail to please all such readers as are not unqualified for the entertainment by their affectation or their ignorance; as if men of education in Great Britain were more ignorant than the rabble, or it required an extraordinary stock of knowledge to comprehend the excellence of old dogrel.

As to Addison's using Jonson and Sidney as his authorities in admiring the ballads, Dennis "very much doubts" if Ben ever said it; and if he did he meant it in jest; and Sidney means that he enjoyed the martial tune to which it was sung, not the words. Moreover, on the authority of Horace and Boileau, great poetry must use figurative language, and the diction must be exalted and sonorous. But the diction of "Chevy Chase" is lacking in figures and is vile and trivial. It is ridiculous to compare it with Virgil, for "this old dogrel is contemptible and Virgil is incomparable and inimitable." Finally, "the dogrel is utterly destitute both of figure and harmony, and consequently void of the great qualities which distinguish poetry and prose." Dennis adds, à propos of Addison's contention that "Chevy Chase" ought to please because it is natural,

There is a way of deviating from nature by bombast or tumour which soars above nature, and enlarges images beyond their real bulk; by affectation, which forsakes nature in quest of something unsuitable; and by imbecility, which degrades nature by faintness and diminution, by obscuring its appearances, and weakening its effects.

Dr. Johnson, in quoting this orphic utterance in his *Life of Addison*, adds,

In "Chevy Chase," there is not much of either bombast or affectation; but there is chill and lifeless imbecility. The story cannot possibly be told in a manner that shall make less impression upon the mind.

At about the same time as Dennis' attack appeared anonymously an unusually clever burlesque of Addison's essay. It is entitled *A Comment upon the History of Tom Thumb*, and is by Dr. William Wagstaff. It reached a second edition within the year of publication.

The *Comment* treats the subject in a mock-serious style, in which many of Addison's own phrases are used and his literary mannerisms cleverly parodied. The design of *Tom Thumb*

was undoubtedly to recommend virtue, and to show that however one may labour under the disadvantages of stature or deformity, or the meanness of parentage, yet if his mind and actions are above the ordinary level, those very disadvantages that seem to depress him, shall add a lustre to his character.

Tom's fall into a pudding-bowl is such an incident as "Virgil himself would have touched upon." The successive incidents of the story are provided with pretended parallels from the *Aeneid*. Addison's deprecatory manner is cleverly hit off in the remark,

And now, though I am very well satisfied with this performance, yet according to the usual modesty of us authors, I am obliged to tell the world, it will be a great satisfaction to me, knowing my own insufficiency, if I have given but some hints of the beauties of this poem, which are capable of being improved by those of greater learning and abilities.

Even the intellectual timorousness of Addison is made the subject of burlesque.

I hope nobody will be offended [writes Wagstaff] at my asserting things so positively, since 'tis the privilege of us commentators, who understand the meaning of an author seventeen hundred years after he wrote, much better than he could ever be supposed to do himself.

Nor indeed was the ridicule of Addison's essays on the ballads confined to his contemporaries. In the *Rambler* (No. 177), Dr. Johnson describes a certain Cantilenus who

turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the natural taste. He offered to show me a copy of "The Children in the Wood," which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and by the help of which the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarity had any claim to such favours from him.

The echoes of *Spectator* No. 85, and the satirical reproduction of Addison's slightly supercilious manner, make the reference unmis-takable.

It will be seen that both Addison's choice of a ballad as a subject for serious discussion, and the nature of his treatment, were sufficiently alien to the spirit of his day to arouse both criticism and satire. Neither Dennis nor Wagstaff had any patience with such poetry; and Dennis especially could not understand how the approval of the mob could have any weight in validating poetry. It is interesting to see that Addison was frightened by the ridicule of his contemporaries, and in the revision of the *Spectator* for publication in volumes, modified many of his most enthusiastic phrases of commendation for the ballads. In the closing paragraph of *Spectator* No. 85, on the "Two Children in the Wood," he had paid his respects to "the little conceited Wits of the age, who can only show their judgment by finding fault"; but in his revision of the *Spectator*, he changed the statement, "The incidents grow out of the subject, and are such as Virgil himself would have touched upon,"¹ to "such as are the most proper to excite pity," and other phrases are correspondingly modified. Addison never seems to have had altogether the courage of his convictions.

But, with all the ridicule to which Addison's *penchant* for ballads exposed him, the effect of these essays of Addison's upon the steadily growing interest in ballads was very marked. It would, of course, be an exaggeration to say that this development would not have taken place without Addison's influence, for folk-poetry was slowly but surely coming to its own; but the early eighteenth-century lover of ballads had now the support of a serious and critical study of "Chevy Chase" by a distinguished author—and an author who had the further advantage of belonging in most respects to the prevailing school of literary opinion. Only two years after the appearance of the *Spectator* essay, Nicholas Rowe² declared his approval of the work of "Those venerable ancient song-inditers," in language which reads like a metrical summary of Addison's essay.

Their words no shuffling double-meaning knew,
Their speech was homely but their hearts were true.—
With rough majestic force they moved the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.

¹ Compare the burlesque just quoted from Wagstaff.

² Prologue to "Jane Shore," 1713.

More explicit evidence is that contained in the *Collection of Old Ballads*, published anonymously¹ in 1723, a collection which was so popular that it went to a second edition within three months after publication.

There are many [says the editor, in the Preface to Vol. II] who perhaps will think it ridiculous enough to enter seriously into a dissertation upon ballads; and therefore I shall say as little as possibly I can. . . . I cannot but observe here, that when the great Sir Philip Sidney commends the old song of "Chevy Chase," his commendation is in a much ruder style than the ballad itself; nor can we in this, and many more of our songs, find one piece of false, or as a modern author calls it, Gothic wit; no vile conceit, no low pun, or double entendre, but the whole is of a piece, apparelled in majestick simplicity, and the true poetical genius appears in every line.

The "modern author" referred to is Addison, and the "Gothic wit" and "majestick simplicity" is an echo of Addison's essay on the same ballad. Moreover, the "Wife of Bath" is included in the collection because "This great man (Addison) having occasion to give us some lines of Ovid, upon the same subject, has first quoted our song-enditer and then the Roman." In the note to "Chevy Chase," which is printed in the first volume of the *Old Ballads*, the editor says, "I shall not here point out the particular beauties of this song, with which even Mr. Addison was so charmed, that in a very accurate criticism upon it, . . . he proves that every line is written with a true spirit of poetry." In the Preface to Vol. III, after remarking that "Mr. Addison's criticism upon Chevy Chase is so full that it would be impertinent to add anything," he argues that the author of "Chevy Chase" not only *might* have been familiar with Virgil (as Addison had contended) but that he *must* have been familiar with Virgil, in order to produce so good a poem in the epic manner.

Equally indicative of the encouragement which the "Chevy Chase" essays gave to the lovers of popular poetry, is Allan Ramsay's remark in the Preface to *The Evergreen*.

I have observed [says he] that readers of the best and most exquisite discernment frequently complain of our modern writings, as filled with affected delicacies and studied refinements, which they would gladly exchange for that natural strength of thought and simplicity of style our forefathers practiced.

¹ Generally attributed, without adequate evidence, to Ambrose Phillips.

And finally, when Bishop Percy was about to give the *Reliques* to a world whose attitude toward folk-poetry was still a matter of uncertainty, he felt constrained to invoke the authority of Addison to justify a serious consideration of the ballad.

In a polished age like the present [he writes in the Preface to the *Reliques*] I am sensible that many of these reliques of antiquity will require great allowances to be made for them. Yet have they, for the most part, a pleasing simplicity, and many artless graces, which, in the opinion of no mean critics, have been thought to compensate for the want of higher beauties.

Percy's footnote identifies the "critics" as Addison, and—on the authority of *Spectator* No. 70—"Mr. Dryden and the witty Lord Dorset." In the collection itself, the old ballad of "Chevy Chase," which occupies the first place, is prefaced by an acknowledgment to Addison, and a justification, in Percy's usual manner, to the effect that "those genuine strokes of nature and artless passion, which have endeared it to the most simple readers, have recommended it to the most refined." The modern version of the ballad is printed with a similar acknowledgment; the "Children in the Wood" is introduced with the statement that it "has been set in so favourable a light by the *Spectator* No. 85"; and even "The Wanton Wife of Bath" is warranted by the fact that "Mr. Addison has pronounced this an excellent old ballad."

In the light of such comments as these, it is certainly not exaggerating to claim for Addison a place of considerable importance in the evolution of interest in the ballad and in folk-poetry generally. He stands among the pioneers in this evolution; and in so doing, must be regarded in any study of the development of Romanticism in the eighteenth century.

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A BIT OF CHAUCER MYTHOLOGY

The link that connects Chaucer's "Prioress' Tale" with the "Rime of Sir Thopas" has long been believed to reveal a glimpse of the figure, the expression, and the personality of the poet. The inferences generally drawn from these twenty-one lines have been that Chaucer's waist was stout, that he habitually turned his eyes to the ground, that his face was "elvish," and that he was of a modest and retiring disposition which would not permit him to mingle with his companions on terms of good fellowship.

The first account of Chaucer into which statements of this nature were incorporated was that prefixed to the edition of the poet's works which was started by Urry.¹ Those parts of the introduction which are based on this link are as follows:

The latter part of his Life inclinable to be fat and corpulent, as appears by the Host's bantering him in the Journey to *Canterbury*, and comparing shapes with him.² . . . his eyes inclining usually to the ground, which is intimated by the Host's words.³ . . . We see nothing merry or jocose in his behaviour with his Pilgrims, but a silent attention to their mirth, rather than any mixture of his own; and when he is called upon by *Harry Baily* the Host, and roused out of his thoughtful Lethargy to tell a Tale, he endeavours to put it off by singing an old Ballad; but that not satisfying the Company, the Tale he tells is grave, moral and instructive.⁴

This view of the significance of the lines was accepted by Tyrwhitt in the following words:

Next to the *Prioress* CHAUCER himself is called upon for his Tale. In the *Prologue* he has dropped a few touches descriptive of his own person

¹ *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, John Urry, London, 1721. This edition was started by Urry in 1711, and after his death in 1715 was continued by Timothy Thomas. The *Life of Chaucer* was originally composed by John Dart, but before publication was altered by William Thomas, Timothy's brother.

² Here a note refers to the lines:

"Now ware you, Sirs, and let this man have place,
He in the waste is shapen as wel as I,
This were a popet in armes to embrace, &c."

³ Here a note refers to the lines:

"What man art thou? (quoth he)
Thou lookist as thou wouldist find an hare,
For evir on the ground I se The stare."

—Urry's Chaucer, folio "e," p. 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, folio "e," p. 4.

and manner, by which we learn, that he was used to look much upon the the ground; was of a corpulent habit; and reserved in his behaviour.¹

Tyrwhitt's view of the meaning of the link has been followed more or less closely by Godwin, Nicolas, Morley, Ward, Jusserand, Courthope, Skeat, Pollard, and Root.²

A re-examination of the contents of the link, however, and of its relations with the preceding and the following tales may perhaps reveal a significance hitherto unobserved. We may as a consequence be led to classify some parts of the current interpretation as mythological, and we may therefore find ourselves rejecting these parts; but perhaps by way of compensation we shall find ourselves able to appreciate even more fully and keenly than before some phases of Chaucer's skill as a literary artist. The link in full is as follows:

Whan seyð was al this miracle, every man
As sobre was that wonder was to se,
Til that our hoste Iapen tho bigan,
And than at erst he loked up-on me,
And seyde thus, "what man artow?" quod he;
"Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an hare,
For ever up-on the ground I see thee stare.

"Approche neer, and loke up merily.
Now war yow, sirs, and lat this man have place;
He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman, smal and fair of face.
He semeth elvish by his contenance,
For un-to no wight dooth he daliaunce.

"Sey now somewhat, sin other folk han sayd;
Tel us a tale of mirthe, and that anon;"—
"Hoste," quod I, "ne beth nat yvel apayd,
For other tale certes can I noon,
But of a ryme I lerned longe agoon."

¹ *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer*, Thomas Tyrwhitt, I, 106. (I quote from the second edition, Oxford, 1798.)

² William Godwin, *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer*, (2d ed., 1804), IV, 182; *Poetical Works of Chaucer*, Aldine ed., I, 54 (I cite the edition of 1893. The *Memoir of Chaucer* was originally written by Sir Harris Nicolas in 1844, and prefixed to the Aldine edition in 1845); Henry Morley, *English Writers*, V, 305; A. W. Ward, *Chaucer* ("English Men of Letters" Series), 144-45, 146; J. J. Jusserand, *Hist. lit. de la langue anglaise*, I, 347; W. J. Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, I, 291; W. W. Skeat, *Complete Works of Chaucer* (Oxford ed.), I, liv (in V, 182, he quotes Tyrwhitt substantially, and says "probably correct"); *Globe Edition*, xxi; R. K. Root, *The Poetry of Chaucer*, 30-32.

"Ye, that is good," quod he; "now shul we here
Som deyntee thing, me thinketh by his chere."

The first two lines, the bearing of the preceding tale on them, and their bearing on the rest of the link, have received no attention in the current interpretation.¹ The tendency to overlook these lines, and consequently to miss the close connection between the link and the previous tale, is perhaps originally due to the presence and the phrasing of the colophon and the titles which intervene between tale and link in the MSS and the printed editions.² After the Urry *Life* had disposed all subsequent readers to regard the later lines of the link with special interest, the attention of readers and editors was focused on these later lines, and away from the first two. And during this later stage, of course, the colophon and title have continued to turn attention toward the following tale and to divert attention away from the connection between the first lines and the preceding tale. In fact, so far as we may infer from the writings of historians of English literature (except ten Brink and Ward) who have expressed themselves on this point, the link has not been regarded as a link at all, but merely as a prologue to Sir Thopas. Let us glance again at the opening lines of the passage:

Whan seyð was al this miracle, every man
As sobre was that wonder was to se,
Til that our hoste Iapen tho bigan—

¹ ten Brink, *Geschichte der Eng. Lit.*, II, 180, in his paraphrase and running comment, does speak of the emotional effect produced by the "Prioress's Tale" upon the pilgrims, but he sees no connection between this and the Host's description of Chaucer. See *infra*, 4, n. 4. Likewise Ward, 144-45.

² Caxtons I and II I have been unable to consult, but Miss Eleanor Prescott Hammond is kind enough to furnish the following notes, taken from the British Museum copies: Caxton I, "Last 5 lines of tale [Prioress's], and colophon, on 260 recto. No heading to link." Caxton II, "Foot of 220 verso, colophon of tale [Prioress's]. Top of 221 recto, 'Here foloweth the prologue of Chaucer's Tale.'" From Thynne's ed., (1532) till Urry's (1721), the colophon and title read (with only slight differences in the spelling) "Here endeth the Prioress tale. And / here folowe the wordes of the / Host to Chaucer." The sole exception is Speght's second edition (1602), which has only: "Here foloweth the wordes of the / Host to Chaucer." Tyrwhitt, the Aldine edition, and Wright have: "Prologue (Prologue) to Sire Thopas." Skeat has: "Here is ended the Prioresses Tale, / PROLOGUE TO SIR THOPAS. / Bihold the murys wordes of the Host to Chaucer." The Globe edition has: "Bihold the murys wordes of the Host to Chaucer." As regards the MSS, Ellesmere, Hengwrt, and Cambridge Gg. 4. 27 have the colophon and title nearly as in Urry (some variants). Corpus has merely "Explicit." Harleian 7334 has no title, colophon, or break. Petworth has the "Man of Law's Tale" following the "Prioress's." Lansdowne has: "Explicit fabula priorise / Incipit prologus de Thopas." Cambridge Dd. 4. 24 reads: "Hic desinit fabula priorise / & incipit / prologus de Sir Thopas per Chaucer narratus."

That is to say, the tale of the "litel clergeon" affected the whole company so much that "wonder was to se." Finally the Host, perhaps a trifle ashamed of his unusual emotion, breaks the silence. And of course, with characteristic indelicacy, he blunders out a crudely humorous reference to the obvious emotion on the poet's face. For the statement that Chaucer is staring on the ground¹ can hardly signify anything else than that he is in the same emotional condition as all the rest of the pilgrims. This inference is supported by the next line, "Approche neer, and loke up *merily*." The reference in the following four lines to the size of Chaucer's waist is doubtless to be taken literally. The jesting here, and in the remainder of the Host's speech, aims to bring Chaucer to his merry self again. But not even yet has the poet recovered his usual countenance, as we may see in the references to his elvishness² and to his continued silence—"unto no wight dooth he daliaunce."³ Finally, however, at the direct demand that he "sey now somewhat," and at the specification of a "tale of mirthe, and that anon"—something that will give the Host the revulsion of feeling that he craves—the poet experiences a violent reaction in his own breast, so that Bailly says, "Now shul we here Som deyntee thing, me thinketh by his chere."

And perhaps the reason for the exuberance of the travesty in "Sir Thopas" is to be found in this altogether natural revulsion of feeling indicated in the last lines of the link.

Some confirmation of my interpretation will be found in the circumstance, pointed out by ten Brink, that the effect of the "Prioress's Tale" is exhibited in the versification, which continues through the link in the same stanza as that employed by the Prioress.⁴

Further support is given by the removal of the hitherto apparent inconsistency between this link and those lines in the general prologue

¹ Of course the word "ever" applied to "stare upon the ground" is undoubtedly due to emotional exaggeration: the meaning is "steadily, fixedly at this moment."

² "Elvish" would seem to apply to the look of "other-worldliness" caused by the mingling of pity and sympathy and strong religious feeling.

³ That is, he is not laughing and talking after his usual fashion, even the remarks of the Host failing to provoke the expected sally of wit.

⁴ "Die Wirkung dieser rührenden Legende ist aus dem ernsten Schweigen der ganzen Wallfahrtsgesellschaft ersichtlich und äussert sich auch in der Darstellung des Dichters, der in dem sich anschliessenden Verbindungstück die von der Priorin verwandte siebenzeilige Strophe festhält. An diesem Punkt setzt Chaucer mit liebenswürdigem Humor sich selber in Scene."—ten Brink, *Geschichte der Eng. Lit.*, zweiter Band, 180.

in which Chaucer pictures himself as the leading spirit in organizing the party,¹ and later as communing intimately with the monk, and slyly making fun of that worthy's remarks.²

And finally, it may not be impertinent here to point out that my view of the significance emotionally of this whole passage both supports, and is supported by, Professor Kittredge's interpretation of the close of the "Pardoner's Tale,"³ and thus helps to throw light on the subtlety of Chaucer's art in representing the emotional experiences of his characters.

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¹ *Prolog*, ll. 30-34.

² *Ibid.*, l. 182.

³ *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXII (December, 1893), 829.



THE STANZA-FORMS OF *SIR THOPAS*

It has long been recognized that the verse form of *Sir Thopas* is a definite feature of the humor of that delightful burlesque, but the exact meaning of it seems to have escaped attention. Some have seen in the prevailing stanzaic form a direct imitation of the stanza found in many of the popular romances and have discovered in the variations an intention on the part of Chaucer to satirize the helplessness and awkwardness of the authors of these romances, who, it is asserted, were unable to preserve the stanza with which they began and allowed it to degenerate into other easier forms and even into mere couplets. Kölbing (*Englische Studien*, XI, 496 ff.) rightly rejected this theory and suggested instead that by the variation of stanza Chaucer meant no more than to exemplify the various meters found in the popular romances of his day: "Ch. mit diesem Strophenwechsel nichts weiter beabsichtigt hat, als die verschiedenen metren zu charakterisiren, in welche romantische stoffe zu seiner zeit behandelt wurden."

In support of his view Kölbing exhibited the poem as containing eight stanzaic forms: (1) a six-line tail-rhyme stanza *aabccb*, vss. 116-21, 146-51, 152-57, 164-69, 180-85, 186-91, 192-97, 198-203; (2) the same, with the scheme *aabaab*, vss. 13-18, 19-24, 25-30, 31-36, 37-42, 43-48, 49-54, 55-60, 61-66, 67-72, 73-78, 122-27, 128-33, 134-39, 140-45; (3) a twelve-line tail-rhyme stanza *aabaabccbcb*, vss. 1-12; (4) a stanza with the scheme *aabrybbg* (*γ* indicating a single-stressed line rhyming with *g*, the second member of the cauda), vss. 79-85; (5) a stanza *aabccbryddg*, vss. 170-79; (6) a stanza *aabaabryccg*, vss. 96-105; (7) a stanza *aabaabryaag*, vss. 86-95; (8) a stanza *aabccbryccg*, vss. 106-15.

These statements are accurate, and at first sight seem to yield no further meaning than Kölbing deduced from them, namely, that Chaucer indulged himself in a considerable variety of stanzaic forms; but examined more closely, they may reveal something of Chaucer's intention and the spirit in which he wrote.

In the first place, we may observe that, distinct as are these eight types, they are all mere variations of a single fundamental stanza, *aabccb*, *a* and *c* having four stresses and *b* three. This scheme expresses all the demands as to stanza structure which the poet felt laid upon him. If he gave more than this, he gave it as heaping measure, and we may well believe that he took a certain pride in this generosity, just as he liked from time to time to bestow on his readers *rimes riches*, although the ordinary rhymes were all that he stood bound for. It was an added beauty, a hint of skill, a suggestion of hoards of untouched wealth. That the poet may, in a particular poem, have chosen to give us more stanzas which show this excess of ornament than stanzas which merely satisfy the minimal requirements should not justify us in regarding him as under obligation for more than the minimum. Thus when Chaucer gives us a large number of stanzas of the form *aabaab*, we are not justified in taking this as the normal form and in feeling that every stanza which has different rhymes for the two sets of long lines is, by so much, a failure to attain the standard for which he was striving. The stanza is *aabccb*, and when this is attained, the poet has satisfied all legitimate demands.

The first variation or, as we may call it, gift of his generosity, is, as we have just seen, a greater richness in the rhymes of the longer lines, making them all rhyme together instead of merely in couplets. Of these we have seventeen as against eight of the standard form *aabccb*. An interesting variety of this, with an even more heaping measure of generosity in rhyme, is shown in vss. 1-12, where the poet joins together two stanzas of the richer type by carrying the rhyme of the short lines through the two stanzas and producing the rhyme-scheme *aabaabccbcb*.

The next variation is of a different type, vss. 79-85. It consists in the introduction into the standard type or the first variation of a short single-stressed line, which, if rightly understood, serves as a mere flourish and does not essentially alter the stanza. The second couplet, it will be noted, does not rhyme with the first, and consequently we may be inclined for a moment to regard the stanza exclusive of the flourish as belonging to the standard type, that is, *aabccb*. But on closer examination it appears that the second couplet though it does not rhyme with the first, does take up the rhyme

which precedes it by two lines just as is the case in the scheme *aabaab*; and we may therefore fairly regard this stanza with the flourish as a variation upon *aabaab* rather than upon the normal *aabccb*. The test of this observation is to read the stanza:

An elf-queen wol I love, y-wis,
 For in this world no womman is
 Worthy to be my make
 In toune;
 Alle othere wommen I forsake,
 And to an elf-queen I me take
 By dale and eek by doune!

The effect is distinctly that of the resumption of a preceding rhyme after a playful flourish.

The remaining variations are all of the same nature, though the results when expressed schematically seem at first very different. They may be presented thus: (1) *aabaabyaag* (vss. 86-95); (2) *aabaabyccg* (vss. 96-105); (3) *aabccbrycg* (vss. 106-15); (4) *aabccbryddg* (vss. 170-79). Any one of them will make clear the structure and meaning of all. Obviously what has occurred is simply that the conventional stanza (*aabaab*) has been completed before the introduction of the flourish, after which a half-stanza of the same type has been added. The only differences between the four variant forms of this group are found in the differing treatments of the rhymes of the couplets.

It seems clear that we have in *Sir Thopas* not a mere miscellaneous collection of stanzaic forms, but a set of variations upon a single form, apparently made for some definite purpose.

What was this purpose? We have already seen that it cannot have been to satirize the awkwardness and helplessness of the authors of romances. It cannot have been, as Kölbing suggested, that Chaucer wished to exemplify the various verse-forms used in the romances of his day; for he uses only a few forms, all of them, as we have seen, simple variants of a single type. As an effort to introduce in a single poem all the meters of the romances *Sir Thopas* would be such a failure as only the most cogent reasons could justify us in charging upon so skilled an artist as Chaucer. If it is an imitation of one particular romance, it is obvious that to have its proper effectiveness it ought to have been formed upon one of the most widely

known of the romances of the day. None of the extant romances could have served as the model—or shall we say, the object of parody?—and it is inconceivable that one so popular as the theory demands could have perished without leaving a trace of itself or any imitations. Again, it can hardly have been Chaucer's object merely to exhibit his versatility in stanza-forms; for, in that case he has been singularly unskilful. In the first place, the variety is, after all, not very great; in the second place, the variations are not introduced climactically, but rather without any discernible principle of arrangement.

What, then, was Chaucer's purpose? The reply has perhaps already suggested itself. *Sir Thopas* is not a bitter satire; it is a good-humored rollicking burlesque, a *tour de force* of high spirits, the brilliance of which has hardly yet been fully recognized. In no other poem can we so plainly and clearly see Chaucer at play, having no end of fun with the romances and his readers and himself. The ballades to Bukton and Scogan and even the joyous lament of the Clerk over the current scarcity of Griseldas are not to be compared with it for freedom and abandon. Every ridiculous feature of the tenth-rate romance is exploited with glee—its exaggerations, its love of insignificant detail, its prolixity, its capacity for consuming hours in "passing a given point." And the versification is marvelously adapted to the contents and the extravagantly mirthful mood. It has the appearance of rapid motion with very slight real advance, and here and there comes a wonderful flourish, a bit of *bravura*, that in a moment communicates to the reader a vivid sense of the frolicsome mood of the poet and the joyousness of his self-imposed task. If we may change our angle of vision and use a homely figure, the author seems, so far as his versification is concerned, like an old horse that after working all day is turned out in the evening into a fine pasture. Relieved of his burden and delighting in his freedom, he stretches his cramped legs and canters across the pasture, kicking up his heels from time to time in sheer exuberance of good feeling, and settling down again into his pleasant canter almost without breaking his stride.

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